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ABSTRACT

The Community Learning Center (CLC) evaluation is based on on-site visits and interviews with staff and students of widely differing ethnic backgrounds. Teaching resources are varied. The Model Cities program is the basic source for CLC funding; the Cambridge Public Library is the center's local sponsor. The external bureaucratic framework needs improving, but the internal framework works very well. Obtaining a balance between guiding and caring and between the need for skills and for social growth provides the best environment in which adults can learn--achieving that balance is the center's purpose and process. CLC's operational viability is one of the strongest elements in its evaluation; it does need more male teachers, however. Evaluation of student progress and teaching performance is in keeping with the center's atmosphere and takes the form of informal, day-to-day feedback. The students view their experience with the center, its programs, and staff as personally rewarding. The center has a good relationship with the community but could involve community members to a greater degree. Generally, CLC is an effective educational organization. The challenge rests in maintaining its effectiveness as it reaches out to a larger population group. (AG)

ED109601

EVALUATION REPORT

ON

THE COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

238 Columbia Street

CAMBRIDGE , MASSACHUSETTS

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EDUCATION & WELFARE
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OCTOBER, 1973

ROBERT L. FRIED
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

OE003 189

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INTRODUCTION

On Columbia Street in East Cambridge stands an old synagogue, with a vaulted roof painted on the inside with clouds and a stained glass window with some panes missing. The original congregation having abandoned East Cambridge for Brookline, Newton, and points west, the synagogue now houses another community, whose members consist of adult learners and teachers who meet together to learn and teach some fundamental skills. Those skills, which they and our society deem necessary for full participation in the social and economic life of the "mainstream," include reading and writing and arithmatic, as well as speaking English. The name of this community, painted on a sign above the old synagogue door, is "Community Learning Center."

The purpose of this report is to present an evaluative picture of the Community Learning Center (CLC): what it is, what it does, how it is run, what are its purpose and priorities, how its performance matches its objectives, what kind of environment it has created for its students and staff, how the participants feel about it, how it relates to the surrounding community, and where it seems to be headed in the future.

In attempting to learn these things, I spent many hours over the course of several months visiting the CLC and talking with people on the inside and outside who interact with CLC in various ways. I talked with students and trained three of them to conduct evaluative interviews with other students in numerous CLC classes. I visited a number of agencies and organizations and interviewed people who are tied to CLC in some official capacity or who collaborate with CLC staff in various educational programs. At the CLC building, I sat in on some staff meetings and some classes, and I interviewed at some length each of the full-time people who comprise the CLC professional staff as well as the five community-VISTAs who are being trained at CLC and who teach in various CLC programs. It was from such staff interviews that I received the most detailed and intimate picture of CLC at work. The CLC staff whom I interviewed are:

JILL RUBINSON, CLC Director;

CAROLE von SETZER, Administrative Assistant;

STEPHANIE ROEDER, Reading Specialist;

SALLY WALDRON, Math Coordinator and VISTA Supervisor;

MARGIE JACOBS, instructor in English and Social Studies;

KATY KENNEDY, ESL (English-as-a-Second Language Coordinator).

I also interviewed the following community-VISTAs working and learning at CLC: DONNA LANGFORD, NELLIE DELMON, RICK NAGLE, JOHN GOMES, and LYDIA ESPADA.

The results of all this evidence-gathering, as well as the analyses and hypotheses which I drew from such evidence, will be found on the following pages.

I begin with a group of lists, charts, and graphs which I hope will give a very broad picture of CLC programs, facts and figures, and will also serve as a point of reference for future chapters of this report.

I. CLC FACTS AND FIGURES

A. CURRENT CLC PROGRAMS (as described in CLC literature)

1. LITERACY TRAINING for adults who cannot read at all, is conducted in a one-to-one tutoring situation. Reading materials are developed by the student and teacher together, based upon stories from the student's own life, as well as pictures, conversations, and shared experiences.

2. ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE) READING for adults with some reading skills, takes place in small classes or in one-to-one tutoring sessions, depending upon the needs of the particular student. Although the curriculum includes some published materials, most is composed by the teachers and students.

3. ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE) MATH for adults with some math skills is conducted as an open classroom or as tutorials. The curriculum is increasingly based on math games and materials composed by teachers and students, especially in the areas of food prices, inflation, and other consumer issues.

4. ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE (ESL) CONVERSATION classes are small and informal, with emphasis on listening and speaking skills. The curriculum centers around relevant survival situations: shopping, the Post Office, job interviews, using the telephone, etc. We also have weekly get-togethers, where students have a chance to get to know each other. We do such things as show slides, go to plays, and learn crafts.

5. ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE (ESL) READING classes are designed for adults who speak some English and have requested classwork in reading and writing. Materials focus upon topics of interest to the students and include student-written as well as published works.

6. ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE (ESL) MATH classes are designed for adults who speak some English and have requested classwork in math. These requests include taking inventory, changing money, filling out tax forms, other consumer related issues, doing basic math in English,

and GED preparation. Materials generally focus upon topics of interest to the student and include student-developed as well as published works and math games.

7. HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (GED) PREPARATION combines practice for the GED exam itself with general skill training, including reading comprehension, writing, and matheematics. Students share in collecting and preparing materials in classes which emphasize self-motivated learning.

8. SPANISH CONVERSATION & PORTUGUESE CONVERSATION classes draw upon the multi-lingual nature of the neighborhood. Case-workers, firefighters, police officers, teachers, and neighborhood residents learn the vocabulary, phrases, and conversational patterns they need to carry out their jobs or speak with their neighbors. There are several long-term and short-term courses offered in various locations. Several of the classes are accredited by Harvard University, Extension Division.

9. TRAINING IN TEACHING ADULTS combines on-the-job training with weekly workshops and college certification. Neighborhood people are working full-time as adult education instructors in a program which culminates in an A.A. degree with certification in adult education. The program is a cooperative effort of the Community Learning Center, Harvard University, Middlesex Community College, and VISTA.

10. HUMAN SERVICES TECHNOLOGY & ELEMENTARY EDUCATION courses provide college-level training, leading towards an A.A. or B.A. degree, for associate professionals working in social service agencies or in elementary schools in Cambridge. One course each semester is chosen and designed by the participants and accredited by either Middlesex Community College or Harvard University, Extension Division.

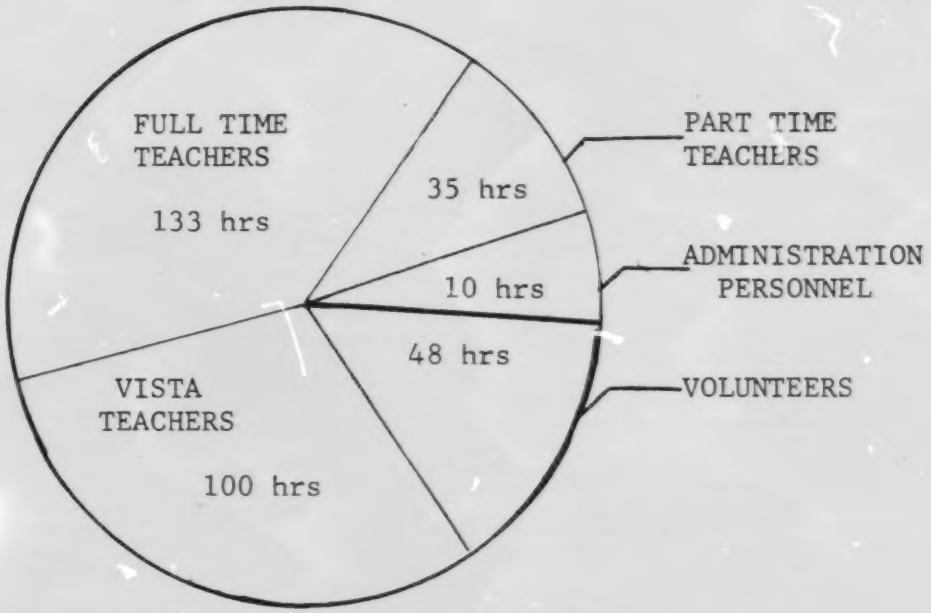
B. CLC STUDENT BODY COMPOSITION, BY PROGRAM

ETHNIC GROUP	TOTAL	ABE	GED	ESL	SPANISH	PORT	COLLEGE
AFRO-AMERICAN	45	14	12		4	1	14
AFRICAN	1		1				
ARMENIAN	3			3			
FRENCH	3			3			
GREEK	5			5			
HAITIAN	24	4		20			
JAPANESE	5			5			
LATIN AMERICAN	25		1	24			
PUERTO RICAN	38	6	3	27		1	1
PORTUGESE	42	2	2	35	2		1
WEST INDIAN	12	2	9		1		
WHITE NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING	133	13	29		33	21	37
GERMAN	1		1				
TOTAL	337	41	58	122	40	23	53

C. CHANGES IN CLC ENROLLMENT OVER A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR

CLC COURSE OR PROGRAM	NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN MAY 1972	NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN MAY 1973
LITERACY TUTORIALS	-	6
ABE	8	31
ABE TUTORIALS	3	9
ESL CONVERSATION - BEGINNING	14	62
ESL CONVERSATION - INTERMEDIATE	25	25
ESL CONVERSATION - ADVANCED	30	15
ESL READING	-	10
ESL MATH	-	7
ESL TUTORIALS	6	13
PRE-GED	-	11
GED	19	38
GED TUTORIALS	6	8
SPANISH CONVERSATION	64	40
PORTUGUESE CONVERSATION	-	23
TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING READING	-	10
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY	--	15
INTERVIEWING AND COUNSELING	-	25
TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING ESL	-	15

D. CLC TEACHING RESOURCES



Graph 1: Hours per week of teaching, tutoring and preparation by each category of CLC resource people

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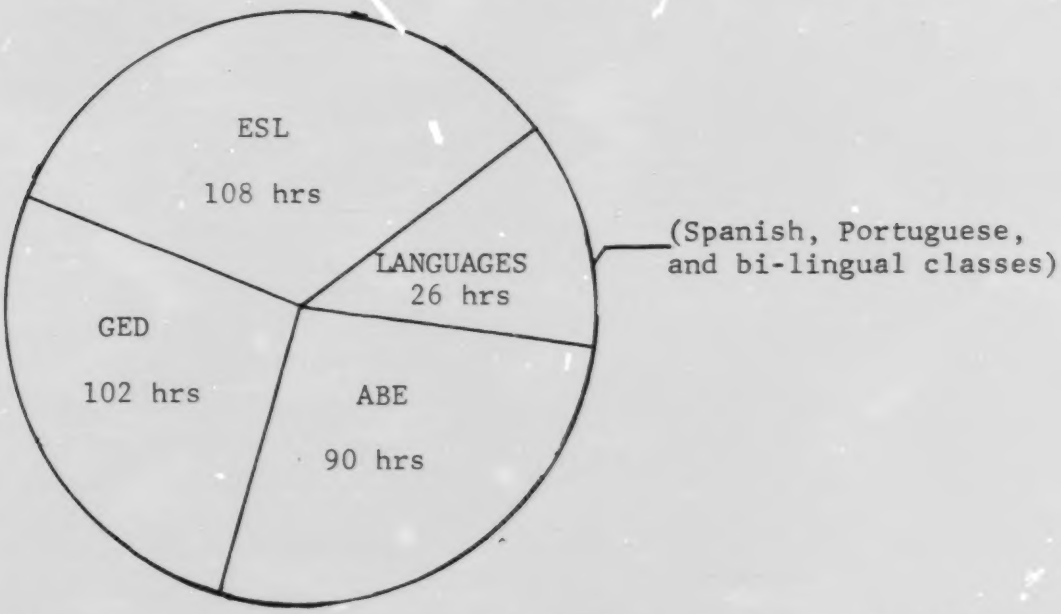
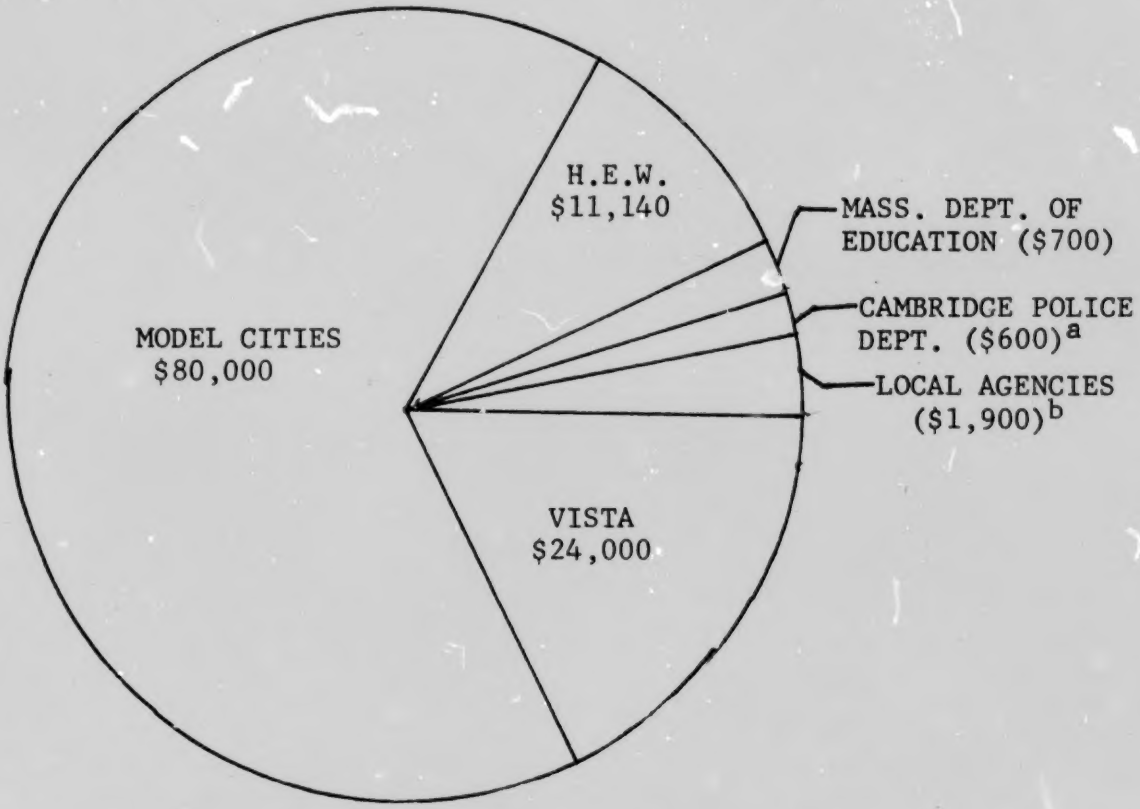
E. DIVISION OF TEACHING RESOURCES AMONG MAJOR CLC PROGRAMS



Graph 2: Total hours per week devoted to classroom teaching, tutoring and preparation in each major subject area.

F. CLC INCOME FOR 1972/73 FISCAL YEAR

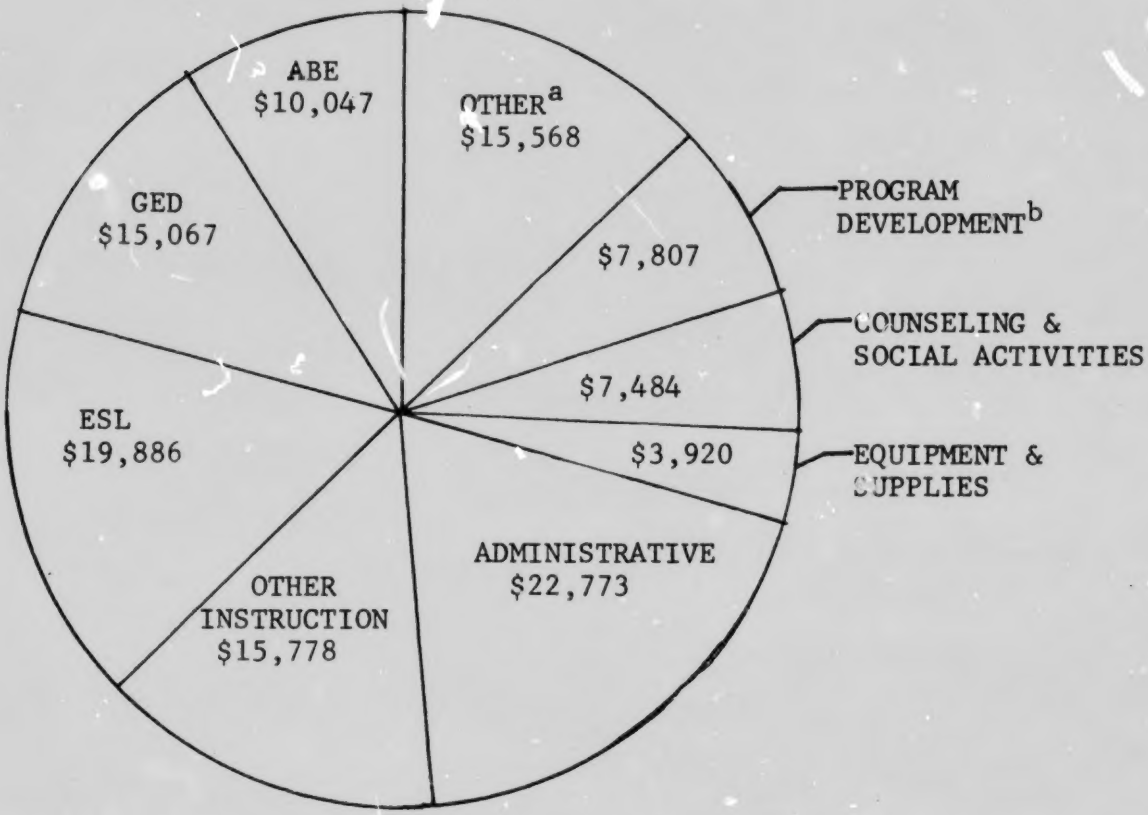


Graph 3: Where CLC funding came from

[a] paid for CLC-sponsored foreign language classes for police

[b] tuition paid for local agency personnel taking college-level courses given at CLC

G. CLC EXPENDITURES FOR 1972/73 FISCAL YEAR



Graph 4: How CLC budget was spent

Note: Expenditures for all categories involving salaried personnel were determined by asking staff to fill out forms describing how many hours per week were spent in each area of activity, and then dividing their salaries proportionally among the various areas.

[a] includes building maintenance, space costs, advertising, telephone, postage, accounting, travel

[b] includes proposal-writing, supervision of tutors, meetings with other agencies

II. CLC GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING

A. THE BUREAUCRATIC FRAMEWORK

CLC has been operating under a contract between 1) the Cambridge Public Library and 2) the City of Cambridge acting on behalf of the Model Cities Administration. Under Model Cities policy, a local agency (the Library) is chosen to "take on" a program (the CLC) which has been developed by Model Cities and which receives the major part of its funding through H.U.D.

The three individuals most directly involved in maintaining and working through this bureaucratic framework at the time of the evaluation were:

Joseph Sakey, Director of the Cambridge Public Library;

Jill Rubinson, Director of CLC;

James Farrell, Executive Direcor of Model Cities Administration, and several members of his staff, namely, Francis Hayes, Director of Program Operations, and Sally Jellenek, Assistant Director of Program Operations.

Other individual and agencies involved in this bureaucratic framework include:

The Cambridge City Manager, who has final approval on all contracts and staff hiring, and whose office must approve all contracts between Model Cities and sponsoring

agencies;

The Model Cities Board (City Demonstration Agency) Inc., a resident citizens group responsible for preliminary approval of staff hiring when hiring of non-Model Cities neighborhood residents is involved, program design, and the yearly program budget (which must then go to the Cambridge City Council and on to H.U.D. for final approval).

B. ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

Joseph Sakey (Library) has been involved with CLC since October, 1972, when the current (1973) operating contract was being negotiated. He estimated spending 5-6 hours per week meeting with Jill Rubinson, reviewing bills and invoices of CLC which must be signed by him, and thinking about problems and issues affecting CLC. Mr. Sakey believes that the Library has served as a "catalyst of ideas"for CLC. He feels that by supporting a policy of "outreach" he has helped CLC take its programs into the community and to establish linkages with other agencies and groups. He credits the Library with acting as "a source of administrative strength and caring," which has helped CLC gain "administrative credibility"and has kept the books and budgeting "in impeccable order."

Mr. Hayes (Model Cities Administration) has been

involved in CLC since 1967, when he was chairman of education for the Model Cities Board and chairman of the Planning Committee for the CLC. In 1970 he became Vice Chairman of the Board of CLC Incorporated (now dissolved). Mr. Hayes sees the current role of MCA as helping CLC gain a more permanent status in Cambridge, as well as a more reliable source of funding, by involving CLC with the School Department. As federal support for Model Cities nears an end, the MCA, under Mr. Farrell's leadership, is taking major responsibility for the political survival of CLC.

Jill Rubinson (CLC) is responsible for the operations of the CLC itself. She is accountable for personnel decisions, fiscal management, various reports, fund-raising, long-range planning, program direction both in the CLC building and wherever CLC classes are held. She reported that "another aspect has to do with personnel and pedagogical issues: listening to what other staff are feeling, doing, pondering; helping to plan general approaches to a class or a workshop; evaluation of ourselves, our progress, our teaching methods, etc."

C. ADMINISTRATIVE VIEWS ON CLC'S CURRENT BUREAUCRATIC FRAMEWORK

Opinions differed considerably on the effectiveness of CLC's current bureaucratic framework. Mr. Sakey feels that CLC is hampered administratively in that the Model Cities Administration and the Model Cities Board present a "stumbling block" to CLC operation. The MCA is slow-acting in obtaining funding and on delivering funds which it is under contract to provide, according to Mr. Sakey, while the Board must be involved in all personnel decisions and in any changes of direction for CLC. As a result, Mr. Sakey feels, the CLC has "no flexibility to respond to needs as they arise" in the community, and the bureaucratic red tape "isn't worth the effort to fight."

For his part, Mr. Hayes, MCA director of program operations, concurred that relations between MCA and the Library were working out "very poorly," but claimed that this was because the Library had relinquished its involvement with the Model Cities Board as soon as it got the contract to supervise CLC operations.

On one point, however, there was no disagreement among any of the persons interviewed. That was on their assessment of Jill Rubinson's effectiveness and skill in reviving CLC as an educational organization in the year and a half since she became CLC director. Mr. Farrell, MCA director, reported that before Jill became director,

CLC had had severe difficulties, including an inability to deal properly with fiscal matters and internal political tensions which resulted in lowered staff morale and in teacher ineffectiveness. "Jill has turned this situation around," he said.

This view was echoed by Sally Jellenek, also of MCA, who views the current CLC as "a creation of Jill's," whom she feels is "very much committed to delivering services, very good at staff development and at talking to other agencies." She reported that Jill Rubinson has "held things together" in working through the bureaucratic difficulties CLC has faced since re-opening. And Mr. Sakey, in praising Jill Rubinson's administration of CLC, expressed the conviction that she "has given the CLC a sense of credibility."

For her part, Jill Rubinson finds "a basic structural problem with the national Model Cities set-up--i.e. that only after Model Cities designs a program do potential local contracting agencies become involved. The sponsoring agency rarely has a real commitment to the Model Cities program because the sponsoring agency had little to do with designing it." Jill Rubinson feels that "tension between Model Cities and sponsoring agencies stems from this initial process."

She expanded on her view of the bureaucratic situation during my interview with her. "I share the goals and ideals of the Model Cities Program, although I see problems in the mass of bureaucratic entanglements which are perhaps inevitable in the combination of federal, state, and city guidelines which impinge upon Model Cities." She pointed to Model Cities policies and practices on staff hiring as an example. While "in favor of the requirement that personnel be Model Cities residents," Jill Rubinson finds that in practice, "hiring takes months. The MCA stipulates advertising; the Model Cities Board must approve any non-resident hiring; the contractor must give his approval, and then so must the City Manager. The length of time this process takes damages flexibility. If we need someone with specific expertise, we can't get them right away."

Jill Rubinson finds, however, that the bureaucratic arrangement under which CLC has been working has been helpful in many ways. "Model Cities and the Library have a certain legitimacy we can rely on for approaching funding sources, other agencies, etc." She also pointed out that "the fiscal management capability" of these supporting agencies "isn't questioned," whereas CLC as a single agency might face rougher going with respect to a potential funding source.

Jill Rubinson was also appreciative, in her interview, of the "strong support that the Model Cities people, and also Mr. Sakey, have given to our concept of citizen participation. I feel this is important in education, especially, where there are so many pressures towards 'certification' requirements. Without this support we wouldn't be able to allow our teacher-trainers (VISTAs) to take as much initiative and responsibility as they do now."

Carole von Setzer, Administrative Assistant of CLC, finds "much unnecessary bureaucracy" which "wastes so much time that we have less time for pertinent business." She points to the problem of requisitioning supplies: "If we want something, even if we can get it right away ourselves, we have to go to City Hall, so they can look around for two weeks trying to get it for two cents cheaper." She finds that such a procedure is "aggravating, it's annoying and it could put you in a very, very bad mood. When it comes right down to it, it's the students who lose."

For the CLC teaching staff, the problems seem more remote, except when , as is currently the case, the question of CLC "survival"is tied to the working out of a successful bureaucratic arrangement.

D. CLC INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

In contrast to the bureaucratic impediments, petty and great, which CLC faces in its dealings with external sources of money or power, the internal governance of CLC is responsive and democratic in its operation. Consideration of person always takes precedence over consideration of policy, whether the person involved is a student or a member of the staff, and the goal of CLC decision-making seems to be to facilitate better working and learning conditions for all involved. A more detailed discussion of staff interaction and the creation of the CLC learning environment will be presented in the next section of this report. Suffice it to say that CLC's collaborative and person-centered ideology is reflected in the way CLC manages to govern itself.

In place of an administrative hierarchy which concentrates decision-making power at the top, as is the case in most traditional schools, the CLC decision-making structure emphasizes both self-initiative and consensus. This is not to say that CLC is without a leader, or that no one takes ultimate responsibility for decisions that are made. Jill Rubinson fulfills both of those functions. But, in her own words, "If this were a place where I made

all the decisions, there'd be a lot less community--and a lot fewer good decisions."

Staff members exercise their own judgment on a wide variety of educational issues: the curriculum they follow, the class materials they develop, their response to the spontaneous demands of a class or to the special needs of a particular student. But at the same time, the staff are encouraged--and expected--to share their personal and pedagogical concerns with their fellow teachers and with Jill (who also teaches six hours per week), and to take into account the experiencd and opinions of others. Says Jill, "I trust the reactions and decisions of other staff. I also trust that they will come to me (and to others) if they think I might disagree or if they want to discuss it. Usually, people want to discuss important decisions; also unimportant ones."

Stephanie Roeder, a full-time teacher and reading coordinator at CLC, voiced an opinion commonly held among the teaching staff concerning this balance between autonomy and interaction: "There's a nice sense of independence in your teaching ...you feel responsibility...you have your own class and your own goals, but you have people to talk to about it. You get both, the independence and the interdependence." Carole von Setzer, the administrative

assistant, emphasized "the sense of personal autonomy," when she spoke about decision-making at CLC. "You feel free, and that's the most beautiful part of the Learning Center, you're free...in the sense that you don't have to wait until Jill is available to see about things. You don't have to grovel to anyone. You have the mobility to be able to move as you want to within the Learning Center so that you can give to the people within the community."

To test my impressions concerning this unique combination of staff autonomy and interdependence in decision-making, I devised a series of problem situations and asked each staff person, in her interview, how much initiative she would take in responding to each situation, and how much need she would feel to consult with others or to defer taking any action until Jill's counsel could be sought. The situations ranged from relatively simple matters, like deciding what level of instruction a new student ought to receive, to complex ones, like hiring a new full-time teacher; from personal questions, like deciding whether to get in touch with a student who's not been to class or offering special counseling for a student who is having academic or personal problems, to public ones, like being interviewed by the media concerning CLC; and from internal issues, like adding a volunteer

teacher to a class one is teaching, to "outreach" issues, like deciding how to respond to a request from a community agency for educational services.

E. THE PATTERN OF DECISION-MAKING WITHIN CLC

The pattern of decision-making that emerged from staff responses to these problem situations was remarkably consistent, and that consistency was underscored by the fact that Jill's expectations for staff performance in decision-making coincided almost perfectly with staff attitudes towards their own initiative and responsibilities in dealing with problem situations. In brief, the pattern looks something like this:

a) Where a direct or immediate response to a student, a colleague, or a visitor is called for, staff members do not hesitate to make that response: answering questions, giving advice, making a referral to someone else on the staff, or just sitting down and talking about what's on the person's mind.

b) Where a decision must be made which concerns one staff person centrally and others only peripherally (e.g. whether to help out in another community agency, or how to respond to the special needs of a student who also has contact with other staff members in other classes),

the staff person will usually make an initial commitment or response, but will reserve final action until she can confer with anyone else on the staff who might be interested or who might feel some involvement in the matter.

c) Where mutual action seems called for, as in the case of developing a program's curriculum, planning a joint course, or responding to a student's needs which cross curricular areas (e.g. an ESL student would like to prepare for the GED exam), an informal series or meetings or consultations will be arranged where the staff persons involved will work out the joint response or agree on a common course of action. Tasks or responsibilities will be shared among the participants, and Jill will be informed about the plans and decisions which have been agreed upon.

d) Where there is a serious problem affecting any staff person, such as dissatisfaction with one's class, a conflict between staff, or any major issue concerning the personnel or direction of CLC, a formal staff meeting is called and the matter is discussed with the expectation that a consensus will be reached on what action to take. Normally, this staff meeting is both preceeded and followed by lots of informal conversations among the staff, so that people know each other's views before the staff meeting takes place, and so that any leftover issues between staff members can be cleared up.

I was not able to determine how fully the CLC-based VISTAs participate in this pattern at the current time. They are encouraged to assume equal roles with the more experienced professional staff (the full-time teachers, Jill Rubinson, and Carole von Setzer) in all formal aspects of decision-making. They are involved in staff meetings and are consulted about curricular and student-related issues in which they have an interest. But whether they yet feel comfortable enough in such settings to make their presence felt with equal weight is unclear. Nor do they seem to enjoy the same frequency and intensity of interaction in decision-making that characterize relationships among the professional staff who have been working together for much longer.

F. SUMMARY

How is CLC run? The answer has two parts. The external bureaucratic framework is ambiguous, often cumbersome, slow-acting and oriented to formal roles. People and agencies involved with CLC relate to it and to each other on more of a contractual than collaborative basis. Distrust grows easily in such soil. Communication is most often by means of reports, forms, vouchers, proposals. But despite the remoteness of this process, there seems

to be genuine well-meaning on the part of both the Cambridge Public Library and the Model Cities Administration towards Jill Rubinson and CLC. All concerned are interested in CLC's survival, and MCA in particular is working to help bring that about, while the Library continues to lend some administrative support to CLC's dealing with the City of Cambrikge. Some more permanent, less ambiguous, bureaucratic arrangement is clearly called for, mainly because such a new arrangement is a condition for CLC financial security in the future. But is is also true that CLC would continue to function and to grow under the present bureaucratic framework if continued funding were available.

Internally, the answer to the question of how CLC is run is an emphatic "Very well!" Even as CLC director, Jill Rubinson, teaches several classes, so do the teaching staff share in the administrative and program-planning aspects of CLC, with the result that CLC's development gives every evidence of being an organic and democratic process. I sat in, one afternoon, on a staff meeting at which a proposal was being prepared for submission to a potential funding source. Each of the professional staff (the VISTAs had not yet been hired) was responsible for writing a draft of one or more sections of the proposal.

As each section was read aloud, its content was discussed and amended by the group. Frequent questions dealt with the extent of compromises in the text which were necessary to insure linguistic compatibility with other sections and, more important, to achieve the closest possible fit between the stipulations and requirements of the funding source and the objectives which CLC staff wanted the proposal to help bring about.

Watching this kind of collaboration in action, wherein individual writing styles and personal and group conceptions of goals had to be meshed with the procedural and structural demands of the proposal format, was exciting verification that this organic and democratic process of CLC decision-making and development really exists and really works.

Thus, while many facets of CLC internal governance are worthy of praise and compare very favorably with other educational organizations I have studied in, worked in, or visited, CLC's decision-making process in particular stands out. While that process demands much time and energy from CLC staff, it contributes greatly, in my observation, to making the CLC a creative and collaborative place in which to work, and therefore a comfortable and caring place in which to learn.

I found Jill Rubinson's own comments on this process to be a confirmation of my own observations: "Obviously, we operate on a group decision-making basis, for ideological and practical reasons. The person/people who must carry out the decision is/are especially important in making it. Decision-making is not simply finding out what people feel about a question, but discussing what is behind that feeling--what professional opinions, personal fears or pleasures, etc. Often, people have to confront some personal things in making a decision. The ultimate objective is not that we 'decide' something, but that we make a commitment to it and get ready to do it."

III. CLC'S SENSE OF PURPOSE

A. FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is CLC's "sense of purpose" as an educational organization? How has it evolved? How fully have CLC staff accepted that purpose? How much of that purpose has been communicated to CLC students, and to others in the community? These are some of the concerns which, to my mind, preceed consideration of the more particular questions concerning CLC's goals and objectives for its students and how well, or how poorly, such objectives are being carried out.

Fundamental questions of purpose are not ones which can be easily answered within the framework of an evaluative study. The answers themselves involve some rather complex factors of personal idealism and practical experience on the part of those people, particularly CLC staff, for whom "sense of purpose" is a very serious matter. Such factors include their ideological viewpoints in relation to local political realities, their educational and cultural orientation prior to coming to CLC, and their exposure to ethnic, class, and cultural identities of CLC students and other residents of East Cambridge.

What emerges as my own sense of CLC's "purpose" or

"mission" comes more from impressions and observations than from testimony or objective survey. It is based more heavily on interviews with CLC staff than on responses from students or persons outside CLC. Therefore, the following attempt at a summary of what CLC is all about should be read with these limitations of perspective in mind.

B. THE SETTING IN WHICH CLC PURPOSE IS CREATED

CLC exists as an educational setting (an abandoned synagogue) in which approximately 350 community residents, most in their 20's or 30's, some younger and some older, participate in a variety of learning experiences. Some of these experiences serve to help them write a sentence or read a paragraph, others serve to help them get a grasp on the English language, or get their own lives into better focus. Still other experiences are designed with specific, measurable achievements in mind: the ability to do simple arithmetic, or to read a newspaper, or to learn enough "social studies" to pass a portion of the high school equivalency exam (the GED). Most CLC students involve themselves in more than one of these learning experiences, often in the same classroom and on the same evening.

The students themselves are mostly poor, working-

class, welfare recipiants, or recent immigrants who, however skilled, have not yet found their place in America's "mainstream." They speak a half-dozen languages, and at least as many dialects of English. But they all share the common identity of being educational "have-nots" in this society. Whatever it is in the way of educational achievement--the possession of knowledge, or skills, or diplomas--that society, or their families, or their own consciences tell them they must have, these people do not have.

Whatever combination of motivation and deprivation brings these students to CLC, they quickly learn that they are not enrolling in a school as they have come to know "school" through past experiences. There are no textbooks, no straight rows of desks facing a blackboard, no stern or kindly schoolmistress standing in front with chalk in one hand and pointer in the other. For a few who come once and don't come back the shock of the "unschool" environment violates their expectations: a dusty old building, a busy ping-pong table parked in the middle of everything, teachers in casual clothes talking with students. CLC just doesn't seem to fit the image of the "enroll--get educated--join the mainstream" institution.

But for the great majority, the 85% or so, who do come back and who are soon bringing along a brother, sister,

or friend, CLC becomes a series of gentle confrontations with a quite different set of images of what education means. The confrontations are with people--teachers who are knowledgeable and supportive but who insist upon "violating" the traditional distance between the role of teacher and that of student; fellow students who talk a lot in class, in unfamiliar accents, about things relevant to the class and also about personal things; even confrontations with oneself in trying to decide what kind of learner one wants to be. The confrontation is also between objectives--having fun or trying to "get somewhere"; between the feeling, at last, of "belonging" in an educational setting and the frustration of painfully slow progress towards that goal of fluency, or mastery, or certification.

The delicate balance which CLC attempts to preserve between such objectives is expressed in a passage from a background statement to a document which Model Cities Administration recently presented to the Cambridge School Department on behalf of CLC:

> Most adults who return to school lack confidence in their own intellectual capabilities. They possess bitter memories of their past academic experiences and a deep distrust of schools. On the other hand, they bring with them rich personal experience, a strong commitment to learning, and very specific educational goals. Generally, the most successful classes are those

which meet the emotional and personal stisfaction needs of students as well as their individual skill requirements. The Community Learning Center has developed small, informal classes, which assure individualized instruction while encouraging intimate sharing of fears, problems and successes.

C. A FLEXIBLE RESPONSE TO STUDENT NEEDS

I found a universal readiness among CLC staff to respond to just such "fears, problems and successes" of students. Each expressed this responsiveness in her own way. For Katy Kennedy, ESL coordinator, it was a matter of first things first: "If someone comes to class with a problem--then that's the most important thing. The teaching secondary to that and nobody's going to learn anything if they're down about something, something they want to talk about." To Sally Waldron, coordinator of the Math program, "how students feel about themselves is more important than specific academic achievements." And for Stephanie Roeder, who heads the ABE program, creating the "social group" within a class is more important than employing any specific teaching "method," since a supportive social group "keeps people coming. Successful classes," as far as Stephanie is concerned, "are social groups."

For all its informality, there is a definite feeling of earnestness and commitment about the place. CLC is not a "freedom to learn" sanctuary where the accepted notion is that all you need to do is remove the obstacles, and learning will spontaneously "happen." The teachers do

not see themselves as passive "facilitators," they are teachers. They care about who comes to class and who doesn't (though they are aware of the difficult contingencies in the lives of their students which affect attendance). They prepare thoroughly for each class meeting even though they are ready to abandon or postpone a lesson whenever a topic or issue of greater interest arises.

CLC teachers know at any given moment how each of their students is doing--not necessarily what grade level he or she is reading on, but whether or not the student is making progress and, even more important, how the student feels about the progress he or she is making.

D. CLC AS A "PROCESS"

This awareness of and sensitivity toward student feelings is probably the central ethic of CLC staff attitudes towards their work. "People here really care a great deal that students have a good experience," reported Jill Rubinson, who feels that CLC encourages an approach to students that "allows for people to grow and responds to people's individual ways of being." CLC is "the kind of place it is," according to another staff person, because "the people who work at CLCare all very strong people. They are sensitive, empathetic with the people who come . . . and they care a whole lot." She summed up CLC

staff attitudes as involving "trust, strength, empathy--commitment to each other, to our students, and to the CLC as a process."

But what kind of a "process" is CLC, and how closely does its "process" coincide with its "purpose"? The process, as I understand it, has a lot to do with what I'm calling the "gentle confrontations" which hopefully lead to genuine and life-related learning experiences. Students enter CLC; they're given a preliminary prescriptive diagnosis in terms of the skills they are seeking; they're invited to join small classes or individual tutorials (depending on their needs, time schedules, or inclinations); and then they are expected to set their own learning goals through interaction with class materials, fellow students, and with teachers. The resources are there. Guidance and support are available. But duretion and motivation are expected, encouraged to come from the learners themselves.

E. CURRICULUM AS "PROCESS"

A part of the "process"has to do with the CLC curriculum. A passage explaining the CLC approach to curriculum appears in the "background statement" to the Model Cities Administration report on CLC, prepared for the Cambridge School Department:

> The focus upon individualized, personal instruction is perhaps best illustrated by the curriculum itself. Virtually all the materials used in classes have been designed at the Community Learning Center. The involvement of students in that process often serves as a strong educational tool in itself. Students are more intrigued by learning when their first reading materials come from themselves rather than from less personal sources. Specific reading skills, for example, are often taught (approached) through writing and story telling.

A specific example of how CLC curriculum operates comes from a mimeographed manual on the "Language Experience Approach" which was written by Stephanie Roeder and Katy Kennedy, coordinaters of the ABE and ESL programs, from their own classroom experiences. The manual is intended both for staff training within CLC and for distribution to other teachers in the Cambridge community and elsewhere who face the unique challenges involved in teaching basic education to adults. I have excerpted three passages from this manual as an illustration of CLC curriculum as "process:"

> In a Language Experience reading class the curriculum consists of the articulated experiences, thoughts and feelings of the students. The first words that are learned are those of the students themselves. Right from the beginning, reading and writing are experienced as the effort of human beings to express and share life experiences, rather than as school subjects to be mastered and enured. Words become something useful, personal and exciting; they tell about our lives and how we feel when we fall asleep at night. They belong to all of us, not just to teachers and authors. They are symbols of sounds and images rather than conglomerates of phonetic parts.

One of the most exciting things about a Language Experience class is tha atmosphere of sharing and personal growth. The process of telling stories and articulating thoughts and feelings encourages students to be active, creative participants in the class. They are there not only to learn "reading" from a teacher but to give to and learn from each other. They can share the reassurance and support so needed by adult learners, and they can discover that they are not alone in their feelings of failure and frustration about learning. They learn to feel self-respect and pride in the face of a learning task which has previously made them feel passive and ashamed.

Using Language Experience to teach reading and writing to adults asks more of the teacher than traditional workbook methods: more time, more energy, more imagination. It requires that the teacher have a firm grasp of phonic skills and sequencing, since no workbook or manual can be followed entirely. Language Experience asks more of students also. It asks them to participate, to share responsibility with the teacher, and to open up channels of communication too long ignored in school. But the rewards are enormous, not only in the development of concrete reading and writing skills, but also in personal growth and self-awareness.

Instead of struggling through lists of disconnected phonic pattern drills, instead of memorizing the consonant doubling rule for its own sake, instead of keeping "reading and writing what I want" some distant, unattainable goal, students express valuable feelings and thoughts <u>now</u> as the core of learning to read and write.

I witnessed part of this curriculum in action one evening at CLC. It was a few days after, at a student's request, a "Question Box" had been mounted on a wall with a promise that "All Questions Will Be Answered." An adult basic education class decided to open that box and respond. The questions inside, some of them serious,

some humorous, were passed around the table, read aloud by the students, talked about and laughed about. One question asked where to find a girlfriend, another wanted shopping hints. The students divided the questions among them and wrote out answers. The following evening, the questions and their answers were posted on the wall for other students to read.

What is significant about such a curriculum is that it cannot be applied--it cannot even be developed--without a process of collaborative interaction between students and teachers. In place of imposed direction, CLC students engage themselves with whichever of the available resources and learning tasks make sense to them. Sometimes this means sitting down with a mimeographed sheet of math problems and slowly working through them. At other times it means getting involved in a class discussion concerning a problem in the community or in someone's life. Still other class sessions give way to small talk, fooling around, asking and giving advice.

This latter type of class activity is often credited by staff with "creating a comfortable place in which students can learn," but sometimes the sequence works the other way, with students working studiously at first until they feel comfortable in the role of student and then,

increasingly, devoting class time to conversation, socializing, building friendships.

In a discussion with three VISTA teachers, Nellie Dedmon, Donna Langford, and Rick Nagle, the question of a possible conflict between students' social needs and skills needs was raised. The responses suggest that even though they are newcomers to the CLC staff and come from different social backgrounds, their awareness of CLC "process" matches that of the professional CLC staff:

ROBBY: What do you do besides teach your subjects?

DONNA: Sometimes what we do in math class doesn't have anything to do with math. In between fractions and decimals, we talk about politics, or zero population growth. It's interesting, and it's a nice diversion.

NELLIE: They try to get their lessons over real quick so they can talk about other things. One woman will talk about her kids--it's good that way.

DONNA: A lot of people come for personal reasons. One woman with a lot of problems comes to class every day, and while she's learning English, we talk about a lot of things that are bothering her. It's doing her some good.

ROBBY: How important a goal for CLC is this social or counseling aspect?

NELLIE: That's how I came here. I was sitting home with the kids after supper--they're raving mad around that time--and I said "I gotta do something between 6 and 9 P.M." When I found out that classes here were from 6 to 9:30, I said "That's perfect for me."

DONNA: Adult education classes at Cambridge High & Latin are very formal, very structured. You don't really get to <u>know</u> anybody there. You're there to do your work and go home. But <u>here</u> it's not that way. You don't feel pressured that you <u>must</u> learn something. You learn at your own rate, not at the rate the teacher says you have to learn.

RICK: That's true of Job Bank, too. The reason people go there is because they have problems. In class, half the time you're teaching, half the time you're just rapping with them about their own personal life--which I think helps them a lot.

ROBBY: What happens in a classroom when you really get into talking about problems--are there other people who say, "Let's get on with the lesson"?

NELLIE: Yes, but we don't just cut it off. We try to get the conversation back into the lesson.

ROBBY: How would you feel if after a math class very little math had been learned--people had spent the time talking instead?

DONNA: That happens all the time. People know what they're here for--to learn math and to get their diploma. If at the time somebody has a greater need to talk about something else, then I'll go with the greater need. It's not compulsory for me to teach math all the time. They do learn things--most of my students have come a long way from when they walked in the door. The overall picture is good.

RICK: People know what they're doing. It's not like they're 12, 13 years old and their mothers are sending them off to school so all they want to do is talk to their friends. If people decide to come, they know what's good for them. They know what it's about.

ROBBY: What about the person who works all day, who has kids, who says: "I have three hours, so I really want to learn something, not just sit around and talk"?

DONNA: Most students might come in with that kind of attitude, but for some reason it doesn't last very long. I think they get caught up in the atmosphere here. There's a whole lot of different kinds of learning, 90% of which takes place outside the formal classroom.

RICK: The teachers are really interested in people's problems, too--not just getting the work across. They talk to the people. Anything they can do to help the people.

NELLIE: They themselves feel such things--some teacher might come in one day, upset or in tears, not feeling like doing any work, so they feel that could happen to students, too.

F. "SKILLS-CENTERED" AND "PERSON-CENTERED" EDUCATION

The above conversation makes one point very clear, concerning CLC attitudes towards students: students are regarded as "people," not as "objects" of a teaching function. CLC staff are quite conscious of that ethic and, in an interview situation, they speak forcefully about the need to relate to students in sensitive, caring ways.

But such an ethic notwithstanding, the business of CLC is teaching and learning. This is so for all of the teachers and most of the students, most of the time. Regular visits to CLC over several months confirmed to my satisfaction that CLC staff devote the great majority of their energies and time to helping students learn necessary skills in reading, math, English as a second language, or preparation for the high school equivalency exam. This work demands commitment and concentration on the part of both student and teacher. It is often exhausting, and progress can be painfully slow. But it provides the backbone for the whole CLC effort and creates a firm basis, in staff service and student skills-building, which allows the less-traditional, more growth-and-problem-centered aspects of CLC process to win such wide approval among students.

Maintaining this balance between "skills-centered" and "person-centered" education is crucial to such a learning environment as exists at CLC. One disregards that balance at one's peril. I was told that a former part-time CLC teacher had once tried to get the CLC to abandon scheduled classes in favor of informal, spontaneous interaction between students and staff "facilitators." This teacher had argued that CLC classes were "too structured" and, as a result, thwarted student initiative and individuality. She was encouraged to present her position to the students, who, after listening silently for some time, told her that they were busy people with many responsibilities and constraints, and unless they could count on finding the class they needed meeting regularly twice a week, it wasn't worth their while making arrangements to come to CLC. The matter ended there.

G. PRINCIPLES AND EXPECTATIONS IN CLC STAFF HIRING

The ability of Jill Rubinson and the CLC staff to recruit and select teachers who are capable of responding to the breadth of student needs is where the process really begins. Various criteria can be employed in staff selection: professional credentials, prior experience, compatibility of personality style, ethnic similarity to

the student population. The choice of criteria is, I believe, crucial--the attitude a person brings to a job depends a lot on how that person got hired, and why.

While taking all of the above criteria into account, one criterion has always been the first priority with Jill Rubinson: the quality of the relationship between teacher and student. The standard she has set in selecting each of the professional teaching staff has been adopted by the staff as a whole in recent hirings, including selecting VISTAs, who were also chosen because of their experience within the CLC neighborhood community.

Jill Rubinson told me that she always looks for people whom she believes will have a good relationship with students, people "who care very much about teaching and about the students as people." She continued, "Also I look for people with a commitment to a community-based program, people with openness to new approaches, and with some humility about their own teaching." Candidates who were rejected were those, frequently, who put something ahead of that sense of relating to students in a deeply caring way. Some candidates, she told me, were "really into developing a curriculum" and seemed unwilling to begin taking their teaching seriously before a curriculum had been hammered out. Such an approach, she said,

is "not our style of teaching--not organically growing from what students want." Thus, the process that leads eventually to CLC curriculum begins with the selection of teachers who don't feel a need to put "curriculum" before teaching.

I was curious as to whether CLC teachers knew why they had been hired, and so I asked each staff person about it in their interviews. "I think Jill sensed in me a certain sort of informality and warmth or concern about people--an interest in that first, and in teaching methods second," reported one. Another believed that her "commitment to teaching adults--sensitivity, warmth or whatever you want to call it" had been the decisive factor, along with her experience in teaching GED preparation. A third felt she had been hired because she "saw things like others around here," which she interpreted as having a "humanistic view of education, sensitivity to people."

I feel a certain series of hypotheses can be put forward, concerning the relationship between the environment in which hiring takes place and the way staff perform on the job. Teachers who know they've been chosen because they were perceived as being sensitive to their students as people will try to live up to that image.

What is more, such teachers usually expect that their working environment will be sensitive to them, and because they expect it to be, they work to make sure it is so. That CLC staff can be explicit about the qualities of personality which they look for in each other, and which are valued in themselves, is part of what makes the "process" of CLC a coherent and convinving one.

H. SUMMARY

What is CLC's "purpose"? What is it all about as an educational organization. In looking at "CLC as a process," I see that the building of sensitive relationships between and among teachers and students receives highest priority--in staff selection, in curriculum development, in classroom activity. The entire CLC approach to adult education seems based upon such relationships and the effect such relationships has upon how and what students are able to learn.

Teachers are hired because, in addition to their training and experience, they are thought to be "sensitive to students as people." Curriculum is created out of the interaction of students with teachers and with one another. The development of supportive "social groups" within classes is seen as helping students of

different background learn about one another and become friends. Teachers move easily into the role of counsellor and advisor without losing sight of their fundamental role of helping students learn needed skills.

The priorities which I observed in effect at CLC are weighted heavily in favor of the creation and maintenance of a supportive and personalized learning environment. Upon entering CLC for the first time, students receive diagnostic tests in which their level of skills is ascertained and at which time the range of learning opportunities are explained to them: beginning classes, intermediate or advanced classes, tutorials, etc. But once enrolled, students are allowed to define their own learning goals. At CLC, "respect for students" includes a refusal to impose learning goals or rates of accomplishment upon students (although I heard much talk among staff about a need for more teacher input in the goal-setting process).

At CLC, the assumption is made that their environment, established upon these priorities, not only promotes learning achievement but responds to equally pressing social needs among students. People need skills and knowledge: to read a newspaper, to shop wisely, to get a diploma and maybe a better job, to speak the English

language, or, as one student put it, "to be able to write a letter in peace." But people also need to feel welcomed, involved, appreciated for themselves and for their contributions.

This is the balance that the CLC "process" attempts to achieve. CLC teachers are very serious about the need for preparation, collaboration, offering guidance and support for students attempting to acquire basic skills. They are conscious of the difference in roles between teachers and students, the different demands which the working/learning environment places on each. They are equally aware that in responding to the "fears, problems and successes" of adult students whose prior educational experiences have often been alienating or humiliating, a great amount of personal attention and caring is needed.

CLC exists to demonstrate that such a balance between guiding and caring, between the need for skills and the need for social growth, is possible and provides the best environment in which adults can learn. That balance is CLC's "process," and also its "purpose."

IV. CLC RESPONSE TO ORIGINAL OBJECTIVES

A. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE SECTIONS ON "PERFORMANCE"

The question of how well CLC is performing in relation to its purpose and its goals is a very difficult one to attempt to answer. In one sense, the entire evaluation report is about "performance," and every section represents an approach to part of the answer of how well CLC is doing, and should be read with that concern in mind.

Furthermore, the concept of "performance" is related to the notion of "perspective." There is no program or organization whose performance cannot be evaluated from at least several perspectives or viewpoints, each of which is likely to suggest a different evaluative picture. This is especially true of an educational program operating in a Model Cities neighborhood, where educational and socio-economic concerns frequently intertwine.

The questions themselves are easy enough to phrase: Is CLC fulfilling its objectives? Is it producing successful students? Has it evolved into a viable educational model? Do those who encounter it directly--students, staff, personnel from other agencies--approve of the way it functions? But since each of these questions leads

from a different perspective, I have decided to treat the question of CLC performance not as one question, i.e. "Is it working?", but as four areas of inquiry, each with a section of its own:

1) CLC Response to Original Objectives, i.e. to what extent has CLC fulfilled the objectives it was designed to meet?

2) CLC Working/Learning Environment, i.e. has CLC become an effective model for adult basic education?

3) Student Assessment and Staff Evaluation, i.e. how is the progress and performance of CLC students and staff assessed?

4) Participant Response to CLC, i.e. how satisfied are CLC's current and former students with the CLC approach to adult education?

B. CLC COMPREHENSIVENESS

The major objective of the CLC, articulated in the original proposal to the Bureau of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education in 1967, was "to originate, develop and implement a comprehensive Adult Basic Education program designed for effectiveness specifically in the recruitment and continued participation of a large urban educationally disaffected population, involving all related

agencies and institutions in the area in a cooperative effort, and insuring national replication to as large an extent as possible." I would like to divide this original objective into its four componant areas: comprehensiveness, recruitment and continued participation, inter-agency cooperation, and national replication.

The list of CLC courses and programs on page 1 of the report speaks somewhat to the issue of comprehensiveness. At CLC, adults can pursue any area of studies from basic literacy through college-level or career-related coursework. CLC courses are generated, upon student request, on a great variety of subjects within the broad framework of Adult Basic Education (ABE), which also includes English-as-a-Second Language (ESL). The CLC is currently offering courses, at the CLC building and in various "satellite" locations throughout Cambridge, in basic reading, beginning math, intermediate reading, intermediate math, beginning, intermediate, and advanced ESL, high school equivalency preparation (GED), Spanish, Portuguese, plus several college courses and a number of special classes devoted to specific problems: reading a driver's manual or newspaper want ads, preparation for naturalization as a U.S. citizen, crafts, and so on. Where an adult on the ABE level of proficiency has an

individual need, such as preparing himself to pass the electrician's licensing exam or learning how to draw up department store inventories, one-to-one tutoring is available.

The attempt to include all aspects of ABE in a comprehensive program is perhaps best illustrated by CLC's approach to ESL. Although ABE classes have been reserved, traditionally, to native speakers of English, CLC has expanded the concept of ABE to include non-native speakers as well. Aside from including students from Haiti, Puerto Rico, the West Indies, and Portugal in its ABE program, CLC has adopted ABE approaches and curricular resources to its entire ESL program, such as small groups, individual instruction, use of student-written materials prepared by CLC teachers, use of practical situations as a basis for class discussion and skills-building. Such an approach is important in a city like Cambridge, where 15% of the population consists of non-native speakers of English and where the use of large classes and standard texts has proven to be ineffective.

C. RECRUITMENT AND CONTINUED PARTICIPATION

The original Model Cities approach to recruitment was to hire a Model Cities resident to develop publicity,

knock on doors in the neighborhood, and spread the word about CLC to other agencies. But after a year, it was found that this approach didn't work. Most of the usual methods of advertising the existence of an educational program do not seem to reach adults whose prior experience with schooling has left them with feelings of insecurity and distrust.

What CLC has learned is that their own students are by far the most effective recruiters that can be found. Community residents seem far more willing to trust someone they know, someone whose learning difficulties are similar to their own but who nevertheless enjoys going to class at the CLC. According to CLC statistics which I gathered from "intake" cards filed for each new student, 61% of ABE and GED students currently enrolled and 75% of ESL students (for whom, presumably, the language barrier makes other forms of advertising ineffective), came to the CLC on the suggestion of people they knew who were already enrolled. These figures, combined with an increase of 93% in CLC enrollment over the past year, show that CLC's reliance on word-of-mouth recruitment is quite effective without being dependent on costly advertising or on specialized recruitment personnel.

CLC also boasts a very high rate of continued

participation and attendance by students once enrolled. CLC statistics from student records show that of those students who enroll and attend at least two classes, only 13% drop out or discontinue their studies. While I did not gather comparative statistics from other ABE programs in the Boston area, I suspect that this drop out rate is very low. Explanations for this phenomenon of student satisfaction with the CLC programs in which they are enrolled will be discussed in the sections on "CLC Working/ Learning Environment" and "Participant Response to CLC."

Jill Rubinson, CLC director, tied the issues of recruitment and continued participation of students to the new CLC "satellite" program. "The CLC has chosen to expand its offerings in a way that assures an intense and targeted recruitment method. Through its satellite program, the CLC is geared to both a constantly-growing enrollment and to a curriculum which, because it is student-generated and student-designed, helps assure continued participation."

D. INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

On the following pages, I have put together a series of charts on CLC inter-agency cooperation. The charts were drawn from notes supplied by CLC staff members involved in such collaborative projects.

CLC OUTREACH AND INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

1. CLC OUTREACH PROGRAMS

SITE	DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF CLC OUTREACH EFFORT
YOUTH RESOURCES BUREAU (YRB)	Agency working with teenagers in Cambridge (part of Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement)	Summer, 1973, CLC ran a GED class for YRB youthworkers who were themselves high school dropouts. YRB workers also attended career-related college courses at CLC.
EAST CAMBRIDGE JOB BANK	Agency funded by YRB to do job counselling and street work with E. Cambridge teenagers and young adults	During 1972-73, CLC gave three classes at Job Bank (Beginning Reading, GED Reading, and Math). An E. Cambridge youth was hired by CLC as a VISTA, received teacher training and is teaching GED classes at Job Bank
LANGLEY TEEN CENTER	A center, run by YRB, for teenagers from Roosevelt Towers Housing Project	CLC and YRB ran a cooperative job-training program, taught participants how to read want ads, fill out job applications, etc. CLC offered ABE reading and writing skills.
WALDEN SQUARE HOUSING PROJECT	A private, inter-faith housing project in North Cambridge	CLC ran a Beginning Reading Class and a Bi-lingual Spanish-English Class during Summer, 1973
CAMBRIDGE HEADSTART	Headstart day-care program	CLC and Harvard Extension jointly offer a college-level course in Spanish Conversation for Headstart teachers, aides, and social workers
CAMBRIDGE SPANISH COUNCIL	Social service agency for Spanish speaking residents of Cambridge	CLC and Spanish Council have co-sponsored several ESL and Spanish Language Classes at both sites. Spanish Council received two VISTAs through CLC contract.

SITE	DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF CLC OUTREACH EFFORT
CAMBRIDGE ORGANIZATION OF PORTUGUESE AMERICANS (COPA)	Social service agency for Portuguese Americans in East Cambridge	CLC and COPA have co-sponsored several ESL and Portuguese Language classes, which were held at COPA offices and at Field Branch Library. COPA received two VISTAs through CLC contract.
CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY, HARRINGTON BRANCH	Field branch of Public Library	Summer, 1973, CLC organized a knitting and crocheting class and co-sponsored an ESL class for Portuguese Americans in cooperation with St. Anthony's Church.
COLUMBIA TERRACE	A private housing project, primarily occupied by Spanish-speaking residents	During 1972, a CLC teacher taught an ESL class at the project for Columbia Terrace residents.
CAMBRIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT		For the past year (1973), CLC has conducted Spanish Language classes especially designed for firemen at all firehouses in Spanish-speaking neighborhoods.
CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT		CLC and Harvard University Extension jointly sponsored a Spanish Language course for policemen.
EAST CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL	A program providing evening classes and activities for adults, located at Kennedy School in East Cambridge	Beginning November, 1973, CLC and E. Camb. Community School will jointly offer a GED class and a Portuguese Language class.
CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTER	A community center providing educational and social programs for residents of Riverside area in Cambridge	Beginning November, 1973, CLC will offer a class in Naturalization and one in New Math for Parents at C.C.C.

2. CLC INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

AGENCY	PURPOSE	NATURE OF COOPERATIVE EFFORTS
EDUCATION WAREHOUSE	Tutoring and counseling program for high school students and dropouts	Cross-referral of students, Ed. Warehouse provides post-GED counseling for CLC students; curriculum resources and in service teacher-training resources are shared. In 1972 CLC helped plan and participated in Reading Workshop at Ed. Warehouse.
POLAROID DEPT. OF EDUCATION & TRAINING	In-house educational and training program for Polaroid employees	CLC and Polaroid share curriculum resources and in service teacher-training.
ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH	Church serving Portuguese community of Cambridge	Joint development of a beginning ESL class for Portuguese-speakers, held at Library.
HARVARD UPWARD BOUND		Resource sharing, cross-referrals, joint funding proposals.
INTERCHANGE INC.	Organization of project directors of Cambridge community education agencies	Joint project planning, funding proposals, resource sharing.
CAMBRIDGE/ SOMERVILLE COMMITTEE FOR TRAINING RESOURCES	Committee to provide training in mental health and related fields	CLC staff member sits on CTR committee; CTR gave workshop on Goal-Setting to CLC staff; CTR course on "Counseling fo: Non-counselors" held at CLC.
CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL DEPT. ABE PROGRAM	State-funded evening ABE program	Joint planning and resource sharing; ABE funded a part-time teacher at CLC.

AGENCY	PURPOSE	NATURE OF COOPERATIVE EFFORTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPT. OF ED. ABE PROJECT	Federally-funded project for part-time and full-time ABE programs	CLC director is on Mass. ABE Teacher-Training Committee; CLC reading specialist is on Reading Task Force; CLC has received technical assistance from ABE project director and supervisor.
AGENCIAS UNIDAS, INC.	A consortium of six Boston and Cambridge based agencies serving Spanish-speaking clients	CLC is a member of Agencias Unidas and receives VISTAs through their association with ACTION.
PHILLIPS BROOKS HOUSE (HARVARD)	Student volunteer organization	Volunteer tutors referred to CLC from PBH.
M.I.T. URBAN ACTION	Student volunteer organization	Student volunteers referred to CLC.
CAMBRIDGE WELFARE DEPARTMENT		CLC has contacted Welfare Department and encouraged referrals to CLC programs.
DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY	Unemployment office	Referrals made to CLC programs.
NEIGHBORHOOD EMPLOYMENT CENTER	Job placement service for Model Cities residents	Refers students to CLC and provides employment counseling for interested CLC students.
HARVARD UNIVERSITY EXTENSION		CLC and Harvard Extension have jointly offered: Spanish courses for policemen and Head-start workers; "Techniques of Teaching ESL" for CLC teacher trainees and School Department teacher aides; "Portuguese Conversation" for public service workers and community residents.

AGENCY	PURPOSE	NATURE OF COOPERATIVE EFFORTS
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE		Offered two courses, "Sociology of Juvenile Delinquency" and "Interviewing & Counseling" for CLC staff and Cambridge social service workers.
WHEELOCK COLLEGE		Several courses offered at CLC for School Department teacher aides.
U. MASS AT BOSTON		Two CLC teacher-trainees are enrolled as full-time students receiving college credit for their work at CLC.
PUBLIC SERVICE CAREERS (PSC)	Model Cities-H.U.D. program to train Model Cities residents and low-level MCA subcontractor personnel and public service employees	CLC programs utilized in GED, ABE, and ESL-training of PSC trainees. CLC college-level courses also utilized by PSC.

I was able to contact three of these agencies in an effort to determine in some depth how CLC interaction is viewed from the other side. The three agencies are all listed as part of CLC's "satellite" program. They are: 1) The Cambridge Organization of Portuguese Americans (COPA), 2) The Cambridge Spanish Council, and 3) The East Cambridge Job Resources Bank (Job Bank). Each is concerned with improving educational and social services for residents of Cambridge and has cooperated with CLC in providing opportunities for adult learners. In each case, I interviewed the agency director and spoke informally with other members of the organization.

Aurelio Torres, Executive Director of COPA, affirmed that both he personally, and COPA as an agency, had "good relations with CLC" and that there is "good communication" between the two organizations. He said that ESL classes organized and taught by CLC staff at both the CLC building and in COPA offices were of benefit to Portuguese Americans living in the area. He reported that the CLC approach, namely, small-group and individualized instruction, has been welcomed by Portuguese residents who had felt uncomfortable in the more impersonal ESL classes offered at the nearby Harrington Public School.

Mr. Torres expressed satisfaction in the quality of

instruction being provided by CLC's professional and VISTA teaching staff and said he would like the program to expand to include more of the estimated 10,000 Portuguese-Americans living in Cambridge whose knowledge of English is inadequate.

Natalie O'Connor, Director of the Cambridge Spanish Council, spoke of a large area of collaboration between CLC and the Spanish Council in dealing with educational needs of the Spanish-speaking community. She listed such joint activities as a teacher exchange, where volunteers from the Spanish Council went to CLC for training in ESL, while CLC teachers came to Spanish Council offices to give special classes for some thirty Spanish-speaking residents, and a course in Spanish for English-speaking professionals and para-professionals which was coordinated by CLC, Spanish Council and Model Cities Administration.

Interaction between CLC and the Spanish Council has been strengthened by their joint application, with COPA, for community-VISTAs to be trained by CLC to teach in community settings. Lydia Espada, a Spanish-speaking VISTA, has been teaching Spanish and English to various community groups, and the Spanish Council is hiring another VISTA to work on problems of bi-lingual education in the public schools. Cross-referrals between CLC and

the Spanish Council continue as a means of providing Spanish-speaking residents with access to services and programs provided by both organizations.

Ms. O'Connor stressed that such inter-agency cooperation is important to the Spanish Council in helping it carry out its primary function as an advocacy and referral agency, rather than one which seeks to provide each of the services needed by Spanish-speaking residents. She observed that "the CLC helps us carry out that philosophy by providing teacher-training, ESL courses, and administrative supervision for VISTAs who are working with the Spanish-speaking community."

Anthony Sapienza and Maryellen Kelley of Job Bank discussed interaction with CLC, which has involved the part-time participation of CLC teachers Stephanie Roeder and Sally Waldron, and the full commitment of a community-VISTA, Rick Nagle, who has been trained at CLC and teaches at Job Bank. Mr. Sapienza expressed appreciation for the fact that Mr. Nagle, whom he described as "previously a client at Job Bank" had been recruited by CLC as a VISTA. "The CLC has demonstrated to us its commitment to involving agency personnel and the community it serves in its decision-making processes. Staff of the CLC and the East Cambridge Job Resources Bank participated in the inter-

viewing and the decision to hire Mr. Nagle," he explained, "and the two agencies have assumed a joint responsibility for supervising his activities."

Mr. Sapienza and Ms. Kelley outlined other instances of cooperation between CLC and Job Bank, including "a course for new professionals" sponsored by CLC and taught by Job Bank staff. They described the CLC as "serving as a readily accessible and valuable community resource."

E. NATIONAL REPLICATION

To date, very little of what CLC has accomplished can be viewed in terms of "national replication." CLC has sponsored training workshops for local area professionals and para-professionals interested in adult basic education, and CLC staff have attended a number of workshops held in various parts of the country. Books of student writings, used in ABE reading and writing classes, have been mimeographed and bound and are available for use in other programs as texts or as models of curriculum development. A handbook on Language Experience Approach, prepared by CLC staff teachers, is similarly available, but as yet CLC staff are looking not to the nation, but rather to Cambridge, as the setting for "replication" of their efforts.

V. CLC'S WORKING/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A. UNDERLYING ASSUMPTION

A basic assumption underlies this section's discussion of CLC operational effectiveness. The assumption is that the way an organization operates within its own internal structure--especially the working attitudes and relationships among its staff--has a great deal to do with that organization's effectiveness in meeting the needs of the people it is designed to serve. An educational organization whose staff promotes and practices such values as 1) encouragement of creativity and initiative, 2) respect for human differences and sensitivity to individual needs, and 3) cooperation in planning and problem-solving, is much more likely to develop respect for such values among its students than is an organization which merely preaches such values without working hard to put them into daily practice in its own operation.

During the several months in which I visited the CLC, during the course of the evaluation project, I was able to observe the CLC trying hard to practice those values which its staff believe are essential to the learning, growth, and development of themselves and their students. The question of what these values are and how they affect the

working/learning environment will be discussed with a view towards evaluating the effectiveness of the CLC as a model for adult education at the community level.

B. THE CLC ENVIRONMENT AS DESCRIBED BY CLC STAFF

CLC staff were asked in their interviews to tell me "what kind of place is CLC to work in," as though they were describing it for the benefit of someone who might be applying for a job there. The responses stressed qualities of the human environment: "It has a relaxed, friendly atmosphere," said one teacher, while another spoke of CLC as "a very comfortable place and basically a warm place," and a third responded that "the atmosphere is generally supportive, challenging. People have the chance to grow with what they're successful at."

CLC staff also mentioned "the eagerness of students to learn," the "commitment of everyone to CLC," and the feeling that "there is always something of value and interest happening." I received no negative responses to the question of what kind of place the CLC is like to work in, and one teacher summed it up by saying, "you have a chance to work together with people, not just with staff, but with students, and do something you think is important."

C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

An important element in the creation of a productive working/learning environment is the ability of staff people to increase their skills and expand their capacity to respond to student needs. At CLC, staff development is encouraged in a variety of ways. College-level courses in areas related to teaching ABE (Adult Basic Education) and ESL (English as a Second Language) are held at CLC for the benefit of staff members as well as for other adult education teachers in the community. VISTAs, who teach in all three of CLC's major program areas as well as teaching courses in other community settings, receive in-class supervision from CLC's professionally-trained teachers and participate in CLC-sponsored training workshops.

I asked staff members what they had learned since coming to CLC, and they mentioned increasing knowledge of their subject areas, improving their teaching abilities, developing self-confidence, and learning how to work with other people. Margie Jacobs, a GED (High School Equivalency preparation) instructor commented, "I've learned more about working collectively with other staff and learned more about the needs, interests, and problems of my students and people from this community." Katy Kennedy, the ESL coordinator, has enjoyed "learning by <u>doing</u> all

all the stuff I'd been told about in graduate school" and said she particularly valuee "the coping skills" which "are hard-won but very valuable to me."

D. EFFECTS OF CLC COLLABORATIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

The most striking impression received from staff interviews and confirmed by visits to the CLC is the degree of collaboration and warmth which characterizes the working/learning environment. One teacher commented, "People here aren't just the people I work with, they are some of my best friends. We've become friends because we share so much: concerns, responsibilities, classes, students." A member of the administrative staff spoke of CLC as "a 'we' atmosphere, not an 'I', but a 'we' atmosphere. It is a sharing and learning experience between students, staff, and other neighborhood programs. It is very supportive. You learn from each other, sharing experiences with the people who come here and with the staff."

Others interviewed noted the absence of "pettiness," "one-upmanship," or "bureaucratic b.s.in dealings of staff or students." Jill Rubinson added her own summary: "I think we have, on the whole, really good working relationships and closeness among ourselves--which helps us grow. I don't think that's my success--I think that's

everyone's--the staff's and the students'." These expressions of excitement and satisfaction were perhaps all the more impressive because the question of staff collaboration was not explicitly raised by me as each staff member was interviewed. Their statements came in response to my questions about the CLC working environment and how it compared to other organizations which CLC staff had worked in.

The benefits to CLC of collaborative relationships among staff are several, and in my observation they contribute greatly to CLC effectiveness as an educational organization:

1. cooperation in decision-making; a strong incentive to generate wide discussion and to seek consensus in reaching important decisions, which results in high staff morale in carrying out decisions thus reached;

2. a sharing of administrative tasks and roles among the entire staff--administrators teach and teachers help develop and administer programs--so that all staff have a stake in the success of CLC programs;

3. team-teaching in a majority of CLC classes, which allows for collective response to student needs within a class and is possible only in an environment in which staff members trust and respect one another;

4. absence of the competitiveness and power-struggle elements which affect most agencies and organizations (including, by all accounts, the CLC in the years preceeding Jill Rubinson's appointment as director) and which divert staff energies from serving client needs;

5. joint efforts at curriculum development and collective response to requests from community groups for assistance in educational planning and programming;

6. special attention to student achievement and learning problems (CLC staff constantly share impressions of how students are doing and are thus able to coordinate efforts at meeting student needs).

Staff collaboration of this scope is not uniformly practiced by all who teach and tutor at CLC. It is most evident among the full-time professional teachers and administrative staff who were observed to be putting into practice each of the collaborative aspects listed above. Evidence gathered from staff interviews and from watching staff members interact in meetings, in classrooms, and around the CLC building, suggests that such collaboration is possible because these staff members not only desire to work together but because they have come to trust each other's abilities and to feel comfortable with each other's personalities.

The scope and intensity of staff collaboration was somewhat less evident among the community-based VISTA teachers, who have been at CLC for a comparatively short time as teachers. However, in their interviews, VISTA teachers told me that collaboration among themselves and between them and the professional teaching staff has grown considerably in recent months, as they have become more confident in their new roles and as they and the professional teachers adjust to each other's personality and style.

E. CLC OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AS SEEN BY OTHERS

Another perspective on CLC's effectiveness as an educational organization came from my interviews with persons outside the CLC who have had extensive contact with it. Although the question of CLC operational viability was not explicitly raised, several persons chose to comment on it. Natalie O'Connor, director of the Cambridge Spanish Council, referred to speculation about whether the CLC could rebuild itself after internal difficulties had closed it down. "Word in the community was that CLC couldn't get going again. But Jill succeeded. She's a good judge of people."

James Farrell, director of Model Cities Administration, spoke of the CLC as "an activity of paramount importance" in the Model Cities community and called CLC "one of the top three out of eleven operating agencies" in the Model Cities neighborhood "in terms of effective services to the community." Sally Jellenek, assistant director of program operations for MCA, referred to CLC as "one of the smoother operations" among Model Cities projects. She added, "People who go there enjoy going there, and the staff enjoy their freedom to approach adult education in a manner which responds to students." And Joseph Sakey, director of the Cambridge Public Library, expressed the view that "CLC staff have done a fine, an outstanding job in view of their mandate."

The strongest affirmation of CLC organizational effectiveness in responding to the special needs of people in the Cambridge community came in a letter from Anthony Sapienza and Maryellen Kelley, director and assistant director, respectively, of an agency called East Cambridge Job Resources Bank (Job Bank). The letter followed a visit I made to Job Bank offices, where I spoke informally to clients and staff concerning their interaction with CLC staff people and programs. I am quoting a passage from the letter since it both confirms the

impressions I received and states the Job Bank view of CLC more coherently than do the random notes I took on that occasion:

> In working with the Job Bank, Ms. Stephanie Roeder and Ms. Sally Waldron, from the Community Learning Center, not only were faced with the fears of the students, but also the often disruptive and chaotic atmosphere at the Job Bank offices. Their ability to create an informal but effective learning situation for staff and clients is noteworthy. The learning process has been characterized by warmth, understanding, and humor, coupled with creative and effective techniques. This combination made possible the kind of learning that was exciting, challenging, and rewarding for their students, in marked contrast to the traditional educational processes in which, heretofore, so many of our clients had experienced failure. We have observed enthusiasm for learning in students so involved that they are reluctant to end classes. Students, we might add, who had previously been completely turned off to education.

F. OPERATIONAL AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

Amid the general sense of CLC operational well-being, several areas were cited as needing some improvement. Concern was expressed about the inadequate presence of male teachers at CLC. In a discussion with two VISTA teachers, the lack of male teachers was cited as a reason why there are fewer male students attending CLC classes than female students. A portion of that discussion, which involved VISTA teachers Donna Langford, Nellie Dedmon, and myself (Robby) follows:

ROBBY: Why do you think more men don't come to CLC?

DONNA: They think it's sissyish--even though they need to

come. It's also pride. A man may not want anyone to know he doesn't have his diploma.

NELLIE: Most men pretend that they've graduated from high school and gotten their diploma.

DONNA: Yes, they don't want anyone to blow their game for them.

ROBBY: What do you do about that situation? Is there a real need here? Ought CLC to find some way to reach these men?

DONNA: I think we should get some more men teachers. Then the men might feel more comfortable. I think a man often resents the fact that a woman is teaching him, especially if she's younger. He resents it, or tries to exploit it, one or the other.

NELLIE: That's very true for a black woman trying to teach a black man, especially if she's younger than he is--he doesn't go for that at all.

ROBBY: So do you think there should be some effort to hire males, especially black males?

DONNA: I think it's true not only for black males, but for whites, too. Plus the fact that a lot of them work. They come home tired at night and don't want to run out for three hours of classes.

NELLIE: Yes, they'd rather go out to a bar and have a beer than sit in a class.

DONNA: But if they'd have someone they could identify with--you know, Joe Blow goes down to the bar, too, but he's over here at the CLC teaching--I think you'd have more men that would come. We've also talked about having a whole class for men--segregating the men--because a lot of men feel funny when they're in with a whole group of women. Some of them don't but most of them do. They should have a man teaching the class--someone they could swear with and not feel funny about it. And then go home and have a beer together afterwards.

Aside from matters of recruitment and male staff, other operational areas of concern which were mentioned by one or more persons included 1) inadequate supervision of part-time teachers and tutors, 2) insufficient attention to keeping

records of student progress and performance, and 3) the gradual but difficult process of fully integrating a new group of non-professional teachers (VISTAs) with a small and closely-knit staff of professional teachers and administrators.

G. SUMMARY

How effective is CLC operationally? What might be called CLC's "operational viability" emerges as one of the strongest elements in the evaluative picture of this organization. If we accept the initial assumption of this section of the report, namely, that the way an organization operates within itself has great bearing on its effectiveness in meeting the needs of those it seeks to serve, then CLC comes out looking very good, with exceptionally high potential as an organization to devote its energies to meeting its objectives.

Contributing to this high potential is the relaxed, warm atmosphere of the place itself, an atmosphere which CLC staff maintain for themselves, as well as for their students. The willingness of staff persons to work at increasing their teaching skills, their interpersonal skills, and their awareness of the community in which they exist also contributes to CLC's effectiveness. Most

remarkably, CLC staff have managed to create a genuinely collaborative working/learning environment--a "we" atmosphere, as one staff member put it--and this has made possible other operational capacities: cooperative decision-making, the sharing of administrative tasks among the entire staff, team-teaching, and communication among teachers in meeting special needs of students.

The effectiveness of CLC's collaborative atmosphere contributes to its reputation among other agencies in the community, a reputation that has increased tremendously since Jill Rubinson reorganized CLC, but it is probably true that the effects of this atmosphere are felt much more deeply within the organization than outside CLC. CLC maintains a rather low profile in the community, preferring to concentrate its energies on enhancing the working/learning environment for students and staff. It attracts new students mainly through personal referrals from students currently enrolled, with advertising recruitment efforts having proved ineffective.

A continuing concern at CLC, despite the overall picture of operational strength, is a deficiency in the number of male teachers. Although the cohesiveness of the predominantly young, female CLC staff probably contributes much to the collaborative atmosphere of the place, the

lack of a sufficient male presence may be limiting access to CLC programs by some members of the Cambridge community who need these programs very much. There is a feeling, expressed by several of the new VISTA teachers, that more male staff at CLC would open up learning possibilities to men in the community who might feel uncomfortable in a class taught by younger women, but who would respond to all-male classes taught be someone with whom they could identify. In fact, one such class, in reading, has recently been started and is being taught by two male volunteer teachers.

VI. STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND STAFF EVALUATION

A. ASSESSING STUDENT PROGRESS

A considerable part of the staff interviews was devoted to questions and discussion concerning how well CLC staff and students are accomplishing the sense of purpose and the personal and learning goals described in previous secions of this report. Teachers were asked about the formal and informal criteria they used in assessing student progress and evaluating their own efforts. They discussed their notions of "success" and "failure" and they described the qualities in their students which seem to lead towards individual achievement.

What emerged as the major aim of CLC classes, in the words of one teacher, is "to aid students in meeting their own personal academic goals." As described by CLC staff, these goals are varied and often highly individualistic. As examples, they listed "preparing for and taking the GED test in twelve weeks," "learning to write a letter to a friend with no help," "studying fractions in order to get a job as a carpenter," "learning the present tense of simple English verbs," "studying the manual for a driver's permit," and "learning how to read a newspaper."

CLC staff maintain that ascertaining achievement of

these goals, or measuring a student's progress over a period of time, cannot always be done by formal testing procedures such as those used to determine what "grade level" a student is working at. But several teachers mentioned a desire to strengthen and improve procedures for goal-setting and informal measurement of student growth. CLC staff in ABE, ESL, and GED programs were, in fact, in the process of writing about their student assessment procedures while this evaluation project was taking place, and they volunteered drafts of their work for inclusion in this report. Two examples appear below:

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PROGRESS IN CLC GED PROGRAM

Evaluations for students preparing for the GED are based upon the acquisition of a progression of skills in three areas: social studies, literature, and grammar.

When a student first enters the CLC, she/he is given a diagnostic exam which enables the student and teacher to determine which skills she/he must work on. It also introduces the student to a standardized, GED-modeled exam. Depending upon the student's performance, she/he is placed into an intensive, accelerated class, or a more gradual class. The division of the GED program into "intensive" and "gradual" classes is based upon the CLC staff's belief that students learn at a different pace and under different environments.

Students in the intensive GED class study from one and a half to three months to take both the literature and social studies exams. Students in the more gradual class usually prepare for nine months for either the social studies or literature test.

Incidentally, of the 46 students enrolled in intensive GED classes in May, 1973, seven students had received

their GED diplomas by August and another eight had passed two or more of the total of five tests which comprise the GED. 25 of the remaining 31 had returned to classes by September.

EVALUATION OF MATH PROGRESS

Evaluation of a student's progress in math is measured in three ways:

1. Initial diagnostic to determine where the student is in math--what skills have been previously mastered and what skills are to be mastered in the future. Depending on the student's prior experience and goal, he/she is given one of two tests: one covers basic operations with whole numbers, the other includes problems with fractions, decimals, and percentages. Occasionally a student comes with experience in algebra and/or geometry in which case he/she is usually given a sample GED exam to determine what gaps there are in preparation. Any diagnostic is always gone over with the student to locate weak and strong areas and to determine the initial direction of math work.

2. Goal-setting by students and teachers. At the beginning of instruction, student and teacher discuss and set personal goals for math instruction. Periodically, they evaluate whether they have reached these goals or where they are in their efforts to do so. This evaluation may include informal discussion of progress, looking over concrete evidence (demonstrated work), and review sheets in a given area or in integrated skills.

Math goals of students vary. Generally, they fall into three areas: basic math, GED preparation, or preparation for a specific test or job (first class fireman's licensing exam, Licensed Practical Nurse exam, etc.). The length of time a student takes to achieve a goal also varies. For GED preparation, it ranges from one month to two years--depending on previous experience, motivation, and ability. Work in basic math usually extends from six months to a year; work for a specific test and/or job preparation covers a similar range.

3. Personal evaluation of progress by the student. This involves the personal perception by the student

of how he/she has improved in math and/or feels differently about learning math.

B. FACTORS INVOLVED IN CLC STUDENT SUCCESS

CLC teachers were in general agreement about the factors that help create successful and unsuccessful student performance. Some of these factors had to do with personal motivation, others were related to a student's perception of concrete goals and how close he or she was in relation to them.

Katy Kennedy, ESL coordinator, feels that a student's belief in "change" is crucial: "Obviously, to get out of your house and come at all you've got to have some push; and the people who come a lot have an incredible desire to learn, to change things. So I guess a person who sees change as possible is the one that does the best. Also, having patience is important--realizing that you can't learn English in two weeks." Margie Jacobs felt that as far as her GED students were concerned, those who knew "why they wanted the GED and had clear goals were those who made best use of CLC programs." By contrast, "those who were least successful had no focus, and were interested but not really committed to getting their GED."

Sally Waldron, math coordinator, and Stephanie Roeder, reading specialist, reported that students "in the middle"

were having the hardest time focusing on goals. "Beginning students are more interested in the learning itself," whereas "the in-between stages are most difficult. When you're beginning, everything is gravy. When you're near the test, you have a goal. In between, you're moving, but you're moving slowly."

Finally, a successful student at CLC is one who can communicate his or her frustrations to a teacher, and thus take advantage of CLC willingness to arrange courses or find instructors to meet student needs. Katy Kennedy, in particular, believes that students "who are willing to communicate what they like and don't like" can get what they want from CLC programs "because we're willing to change. You can have a feeling that someone is unhappy here and is not getting what they want, but unless it comes out, that person will just stop coming, as opposed to our changing something to make it a better situation for that person."

C. STAFF EVALUATION AND SELF-EVALUATION

Formal evaluation of staff members is not practiced at CLC, yet I was aware that a process of informal evaluation and feedback was going on all the time. In her interview, Stephanie Roeder told me she felt her work

was "evaluated by everybody here. If I share a class, or if someone just comes in, I get feedback then. I get feedback after a class, in talking with whoever is around. More formal feedback is available, but nobody pushes it on you." She reported that she had asked for more intensive evaluative feedback "a few times in crisis situations," and that she found it "incredibly helpful." She has also taped some of her classes in order to review her own teaching performance.

In the informal feedback process, the views of one's students and fellow teachers are regularly sought, and this process seemed to be going on with every CLC teacher I spoke to. In some cases, teachers asked each other to sit in on classes. Others regularly discussed their performance with those with whom they were team-teaching. Interestingly, CLC teachers often spoke in the same sentence of seeking feedback from other teachers and from students, and seemed to give equal importance to both.

I received a very strong impression that CLC teachers see critical evaluation and positive support as part of the same important, but personalized and caring, process. Teachers used various approaches to gauging student reactions to each class (taking into account student unwillingness to criticize a teacher openly, even when she asked

for it). Margie Jacobs said that when her GED students "seem hesitant to say what they feel" about her class, she asks Nellie Dedmon (a community-VISTA studying with Margie), because "Nellie generally knows what all the other students are feeling." With her own students, Nellie Dedmon relies on her intuition and on contacts with students outside of class: "I know I'm doing okay if I'm teaching and at the end of the class the students seem to have understood what we were doing. But if they seem confused, then I know that, too. The students talk to me, and I see a lot of them outside of class. I always ask them how things are going."

Aside from feedback, CLC teachers rely on self-evaluation, and on their perceptions of student growth or lack of growth, in determining the success or failure of their efforts. For Katy Kennedy, "a lot of it is how people are feeling, what they say, whether they keep coming back, whether they bring their friends; whether we feel good about what we've been teaching and whether the students seem to be getting anything out of it."

Success is exemplified, for CLC teachers, by students achieving a "breakthrough," a visible increase in their skills, or as a contagious excitement about learning that reveals itself in classroom behavior. For Stephanie Roeder,

this happens "when there is a block or a lack or something in a student and that gets overcome and the student learns something he or she didn't know before and begins to move." Margie Jacobs feels successful as a teacher when her students "get excited, talk about, react to the materials and to each other--when they feel they are succeeding." The concrete accomplishment (i.e. passing the GED) is also important as a measure of success, but what pleases Margie Jacobs most is when her students are able to "take what they read and apply it to their own experiences" and to "think about contemporary problems and where they originate."

One sort of failure, on the other hand, is felt by CLC teachers when students become passive--"when the students leave all the work and direction up to me, we are both failing," or when they feel themselves to be inflexible--"getting stuck doing things in certain ways is a failing, since if it doesn't work there are no alternatives." In discussions about "failure," CLC teachers seemed unwilling to blame students for lack of accomplishment. They recognized such things as "lack of motivation," infrequent attendance, or "playing around" on the part of students as obstacles to learning, but the word "failure" was never used as a judgmental or final assessment.

D. SUMMARY

Evaluation of student progress and of a teacher's own performance is a very important part of the CLC learning environment. But it is also a part of the CLC "process" and thus it takes place within an atmosphere of sensitivity and caring. Students receive a diagnostic test upon entering CLC, and they are encouraged to take practice tests when they are involved in preparing themselves for a GED exam or a job-related exam. Teachers will tape record their classes or sometimes ask another teacher to sit in and watch them teach, in order to gain a better picture of their work.

But it is the informal, day-to-day forms of assessment and feedback which dominate the evaluative framework of the CLC. Since learning programs are geared to a great variety of student goals and schedules, assessment of student performance must also take place in a flexible and personalized manner. Again, this is as true for evaluating teacher performance as for assessing students.

Since no evaluation procedures are forced on either students or teachers at CLC, the entire assessment picture has an informal and voluntary quality about it. But such a quality should not be mistaken for laxity or indifference. Quite the contrary, it is because the interaction among and

between CLC students and staff takes place in a voluntary atmosphere that evaluation, or "feedback," is taken very seriously, both when it is given and when it is received.

The informality of the process has not prevented CLC staff from working on specific goal-setting procedures to help students get over the difficult "middle period" of their studies, when the first thrill of revived learning has somewhat dimmed, and the specific goal the student is working towards seems very difficult to reach. The need for "intermediate goals" has recently been recognized by staff as an important part of the support environment. Staff in each of the major CLC programs spent part of the summer devising various techniques and mechanisms to help students maintain a steady rate of progress.

In opting for an essentially voluntary and personalized approach to student assessment and staff evaluation, the CLC is demonstrating a willingness to risk doing without the formal kind of "accountability" which more rigorous assessment procedures might provide, in favor of a more relaxed and person-centered atmosphere, free of judgmental actions, and supportive of individual responsibility and mutual trust in personal evaluation. In view of the total environment which CLC staff have created, it seems to be a risk very much worth taking.

VII. PARTICIPANT RESPONSE TO CLC

A. THE PROCESS

After consultation with CLC staff, I decided that the best method of gaining information on student response to the CLC and its programs was to recruit several current CLC students, train them to conduct group and individual interviews, devise a list of important questions, and then have them gather the primary data from fellow students in a cross section of CLC classes, and from former CLC students through telephone interviews. This information would be relayed to the Project Consultant who would include it in his report.

The purpose of this method was three-fold. First, the students involved as interviewers might learn from the task itself, gaining skills in interviewing, analyzing, and presenting information. They would be paid for their work from the project budget. Second, they were encouraged to facilitate group discussion on the questions within the classes they visited and thereby stimulate student thinking on issues of importance to themselves and to CLC. Third, it was hoped that by seeking information from their fellow students, without the presence in the classroom of either teachers or Project Consultant, the student

interviewers would obtain information that was spontaneous and honest.

In a "de-briefing" session, after the class interviews had been completed, the three student interviewers reported that these objectives had been achieved. They felt the students had responded "very well" to their coming into class and asking questions. "They seemed very frank. When they had to criticize something, they did," reported one interviewer. The students had talked among themselves in responding to questions posed by the interviewers. "Someone would start to give an answer to one of our questions and then others would raise points and discuss them back and forth." The interviewers were satisfied with their approach to gathering information by interviewing one class at a time. "It was more personal than trying to talk to all the CLC students in one large group or giving them forms," said one interviewer. Another felt that "the students didn't feel as though we were pressuring them, or taking their names. This way it was more informal."

B. THE QUESTIONS

The following questions, used in classroom interviews, were developed in discussions between the student interviewers and the Project Consultant. One question (#7)

was suggested by a CLC staff member:

1. What did you come here looking for?

2. How satisfied are you with your progress?

3. What differences do you find between the Community Learning Center and public schools you have attended?

4. What do you like best about the Community Learning Center? What do you like best about the particular program you're in?

5. What could be improved in the Community Learning Center? in your program?

6. How have Community Learning Center teachers been helpful to you? How could they be more helpful?

7. Why do you think some students leave the Community Learning Center after coming here a few times?

8. What changes would you like to see in: a) the Community Learning Center as a whole? b) the program that you are in? c) your relationships with teachers and fellow students?

The interviewers recorded student responses by writing them on a large newsprint tablet in front of the class. After each response was recorded, the interviewers asked the class how many agreed with the statement and recorded that number. This process seemed to encourage group discussion, although it made for somewhat fragmentary

recording of responses, since the interviewers were simultaneously leading the discussion and writing down answers.

C. THE ANSWERS

The classes visited by the interviewers included four in ESL, ranging from 2 to 9 students; one ABE reading class of 4 students; and two GED classes (a Social Studies class with 6 students and a Math class with 11 students.) A total of 41 ESL, ABE, and GED students were involved in the interview process, representing approximately 20% of CLC students enrolled in the three programs.

QUESTION 1: "What Did You Come Here Looking For?"

Students in ESL classes responded that they had come "to learn to speak English," to "learn English," to "learn to read and write." The ABE students had come to learn "reading and writing." The GED students wanted "general education," "GED preparation," and "learning things missed out in public school."

I asked the student interviewers whether they thought students came to CLC to socialize, to meet people, as opposed to more formal educational goals. One interviewer said, "From my own experience, the majority of people are not coming here to waste their time. Most are married

people, with children, and it's kind of a job to get away and come here. So when they come here--it's to learn. A few, who are single, may be coming here to meet people. But most are coming to learn. They don't want to fool around." She herself is an older woman, and a mother. Another interviewer, about twenty years of age and single, felt the two goals were rather more compatible: "Some spoke of enjoying meeting people here--but they came to get an deucation at the same time. There's always a connection."

QUESTION 2: "How Satisfied Are You With Your Progress?"

Students in all three programs said they were "satisfied," "very satisfied," "satisfied with progress" with respect to their rate of achievement. Several students in a GED class commented "good progress and getting better," while another GED student reported that progress was "slow but steady."

QUESTION 3: "What Differences Do You Find Between CLC and Public School?"

The most frequent response from all groups was that the CLC's "small classes and individual attention" was the basic difference. Students also mentioned CLC's "informal, casual atmosphere," and the fact that CLC was "more personal" and involved "less pressure, more freedom" for students. One class mentioned "open relationship with

teachers" as a significant difference between CLC and public school.

I asked the interviewers what it is about CLC that seems to make learning more enjoyable than other types of schooling. They said, "It's a whole different atmosphere, especially if you're comparing it to a public school. One interviewer pointed out that "some students feel that if they have questions they feel more at ease asking them here at CLC."

QUESTION 4a: "What Do You Like Best About CLC?"

The responses here were varied. As recorded on the newsprint sheets, they read something like this: "convenient," "wide range of courses," "it's free," "everything is fine," "the people are nice," "it's convenient--in the neighborhood," "good hours," "friendly surroundings." With respect to this last comment, an interviewer reported, "As soon as one mentioned it, everyone shouted 'Yeah! Yeah!' They really got excited." Another interviewer added, "One of the things they liked best was getting along with other students."

QUESTION 4b: "What Do You Like Best About The Particular Program You're In?"

Students mentioned such things as "meeting and learning from different people from other countries," the fact that "the teachers are very patient," the "variety of classes,"

and the "chance to work at our own pace."

QUESTION 5a,b: What Could Be Improved In The CLC? In Your Own Program?"

The two parts of the question seemed to be considered together in the classroom discussions. Some complaints were physical: "better heat in winter," "cleaner restroom." According to the interviewers, "everyone mentioned the heat; quite a few mentioned the restroom." I asked whether any students had talked about the building, aside from the bathroom and the heat. One interviewer replied, "Some of them mentioned that the rooms were too small for large groups, like eleven. They weren't able to move around." Another interviewer rejoined: "I like the building, because when you walk in it's very big and open. Immediatly, you don't feel like you're in a school where it's uptight."

A more serious issue concerned materials, especially books for home study. The interviewers commented: "A lot of them felt they needed more materials. Everything is xeroxed and you end up with lots of pages which are easy to lose. It's so much easier to have books which you can keep and study, or go ahead in, or go back if you want to. Quite a few mentioned the need for more materials and books." Other students requested increased educational

services: "more reading and writing classes," "more class hours," "teachers in different subjects," "more tutoring opportunities."

QUESTION 6a: "How Have CLC Teachers Been Helpful To You?"

Students in all groups visited by the interviewers were exhuberant in their appreciation of the efforts of CLC staff teachers: "teachers are great! Beautiful!", "teachers are doing the best they can," "teachers are concerned and pay attention to students," "teachers have been very helpful in every way," "they have lots of patience," "very helpful," "very understanding," and so on.

QUESTION 6b: "How Could Teachers Be More Heopful?"

Studnets gave rather short shrift to this part of the question, in view of their unreservedly positive response to the first part. The newsprint sheets record "satisfied," "everyone satisfied," "very satisfied," etc.

QUESTION 7: "Why Do You Think Some Students Leave CLC After Coming Here A Few Times?"

This question, quite frankly, was designed to allow students, if they wished, to express their own anxieties and disappointments about CLC in commenting on why others had left. If comments stressed "internal" factors at CLC (e.g. learning problems, program inadequacies), it

was felt that such statements might be reflective of the speakers' own concerns, whereas "external" factors (e.g. job changes, moving out of the area) would not be reflective.

According to the interviewers, most of the discussions concerned such "external"factors: "personal reasons concerning work," "people taking jobs where they couldn't come any more," "can't afford babysitting," "people leaving the area." Among the so-called "internal" factors mentioned, some comments reflected the students' recognition of the the commitment and patience needed on their own part if their experience at CLC was to be successful. In one class, "misconception of the CLC" was listed as a factor. When I asked one interviewer what that meant, she replied, "Maybe they think they're going to get their diploma immediately and they won't have to work very hard." Another comment was "not satisfied with own self," and an interviewer interpreted that as implying "they felt they should learn faster." Other comments: "discouragement," "loss of interest," "expectations too high," "personal reasons," confirmed the students' feelings that the causes for discontinuation of studies lay in inadequate motivation or faulty expectations. In only one case was a factor mentioned that reflected on CLC itself. A GED student remarked that he knew a student or students who had left because of

"no male teachers" in the program in which he (they) were enrolled.

QUESTION 8a: "What Changes Would You Like To See In a) CLC As A Whole?"

Responses to this question were often repetitions of comments made in earlier descussion (especially 4a,b). Students listed "more materials," "more teachers," "more time to learn." There also were comments on the CLC building, with students suggesting "larger rooms," "clean window screens," "maintain heat during winter." Two groups requested "no changes."

QUESTION 8b: "What Changes Would You Like To See In The Program You're In?"

Four of the seven classes visited wanted "no changes." An ESL class member requested "classes on different levels--elementary to advanced," while two other groups wanted "slides, films" in their curriculum.

QUESTION 8c: "What Changes Would You Like To See In Your Relationships With Teachers And Fellow Students?"

This last question brought a near-unanimous chorus of "no changes," "everything great!" "everything fine," "wonderful--beautiful!" One class reported "very strong fellowship between teachers and students." According to an interviewer, "that was a general response. Everyone

got very bubbly when that was mentioned. That's another contrast with a public school--if these questions were asked there, everyone would probably hem and haw and look around to see who's answering. But here everyone got really excited."

D. STUDENTS WHO STOPPED COMING

Twenty-five students who had once been involved with CLC, but either stopped coming to class or, in a few cases, never attended classes after the initial contact, were selected from CLC files to be interviewed. The students were picked at random, except that 1) all had telephones and 2) former ESL students were screened to omit those who could not speak English. One of the three student interviewers volunteered to contact these twenty-five students by telephone to find out why they had terminated their studies at CLC.

Of these twenty-five, ten were unable to be reached because their phones had been disconnected, most likely because they had moved out of the neighborhood. Four others were not at home when the interviewer called. The interviewer was able to make contact with the remaining eleven former CLC students.

The interviewer reported that in every case the

conversation was friendly, and the former students seemed quite happy to discuss their reasons for no longer being involved in CLC programs. Their reasons given are as follows (some gave more than one reason):

EMPLOYMENT (full-time day or night jobs) 6

OTHER SCHOOLING (college, GED in own neighborhood, on-the-job training) 4

BABY-SITTING PROBLEM 1

ILLNESS. 1

NOT QUITE READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL 1

According to the interviewer, "Not one of the people I talked to was critical of the CLC. Many had a lot of praise for the teachers. Almost all of them are either working or going to school somewhere else--on the job, or closer to where they live or work. Some of them, three or so, seriously intend to come back to CLC, either during the summer or next fall. But for others, once they got jobs and felt a little secure, they put making a living ahead of furthering their education."

I find no evidence in their limited sample of former CLC students to suggest that CLC programs or policies are turning any students away or discouraging them from continuing their studies. The findings of the interviewer seem to confirm the opinions of current CLC students on this

point, namely, that "external" reasons (jobs, moving out of the area, baby-sitting) and insufficient motivation (e.g. people who found employment and were no longer interested in school) account for discontinuation of studies at CLC.

E. SUMMARY

Despite (or perhaps because of) the informality of the information-gathering and the abbreviated recording of student comments on a newsprint pad, I feel that the process of class-by-class interviews, led by CLC students who had been trained for the project, provides an accurate account of student opinions regarding the CLC. The students participated freely and energetically in classroom discussions stimulated by the three student interviewers and with no non-student present. They saw their comments recorded in front of them, had a chance to affirm or dispute those statements, and were able to view the results of their evaluation. On the basis of those results and additional analysis of student opinion which the interviewers supplied in a "de-briefing" session, I draw the following conclusions regarding participant attitudes towards the CLC:

1. Students come to CLC with specific learning goals in mind. They are satisfied with the progress they are

making, and they assume personal responsibility for continuing that progress. They believe that those who have discontinued studies at CLC have done so because of changed life situations or inadequate motivation, and this belief was confirmed in telephone interviews with a random sample of students who had stopped coming to CLC.

2. CLC students find the atmosphere and approach to learning of the CLC to be markedly different from what they have experienced in prior schooling. They welcome the informality, the small classes, the individual attention. Although they would like to see some changes in the CLC building (more heat in winter, cleaner bathrooms) and would appreciate a greater variety of instructional materials (films, texts, exercise books), they appear quite satisfied with their programs of study.

3. Students have very warm feelings for their teachers. They especially appreciate qualities of helpfulness, patience, and understanding which they find in their teachers, and they declined to suggest ways in which CLC teaching can be improved.

4. Students recognize and welcome feelings of fellowship between themselves. They speak of CLC's "friendly surroundings," of enjoying the process of "getting along with one another." They see a connection between the

pursuit of learning and friendly relationships with fellow students and with teachers.

It seems evident from student response that those adult community residents who have enrolled and pursued programs of study at CLC are finding the experience to be a rewarding and enjoyable one. They are excited about the quality of instruction, the learning atmosphere, and the development of relationships within the learning experience.

VIII. CLC AND ITS COMMUNITY

A. DEFINING COMMUNITY

If a "Community Learning Center" is to live up to its name, those who work in it should possess a fairly coherent idea of the "community" which their center is trying to serve. Whom does that "community" comprise--all its citizens, or certain classes and groups? Is "community" in this sense a geographical concept? ethnic? socio-economic? or all of these?

Once this "community" has been defined, other questions must be asked. What are this community's problems and needs, educational and otherwise? Which of these has the learning center chosen to respond to--and why? What are the strengths and resources of the community which the center can support or build upon? Which aspects or conditions or community life make educational development of its citizens more difficult?

Finally, there are the personal questions of identification and commitment which all who seek to work in this community must ask themselves. Is this "my community," too, or does it belong to "them", the people I'm here to serve? How much responsibility do I have to intervene in the lives of my students? in the issues of the community?

During interviews with CLC staff, all of these questions were raised and discussed. For several staff persons, the matter of community identification was a central concern--a key factor in their attitude towards their work. Others acknowledged more of a distance between themselves and the community which surrounds CLC. But the issues revolving around CLC and "the community" are very much alive for all who teach and work at CLC.

CLC staff were asked who the people are who, in their opinion, comprise "the community" which CLC is trying to serve. Their answers tended to focus on factors of geography, socio-economic class, and previous experiences with schooling, as well as age and ethnic background.

Everyone interviewed mentioned that "the community" which was CLC's concern certainly included the local one, "the neighborhood right around the center," people "within walking distance of CLC." Others stressed that CLC was there for "anyone who needs the service we give," including anybody in Cambridge and "from parts of Somerville and Medford that are a reasonably close car drive."

All mentioned the low-income status of those whom CLC was attempting to serve, describing them as "poor to working class" with a scattered few of middle-income

status. Educationally, the CLC target community consists of people without high school diplomas or those "who can't read well enough or speak English well enough to be comfortable."

According to CLC director, Jill Rubinson, the current emphasis on ESL, ABE, and GED in the CLC curriculum is based upon a Model Cities survey of educational levels and needs in the neighborhood. All staff members interviewed concurred with the statement of needs which is part of the Model Cities Administration report to the Cambridge School Department:

> Cambridge is ethnically, culturally, and economically diverse. Portuguese-speaking people from the mainland and from the Azores; Spanish-speaking people from Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America; Haitians, Greeks, Italians, Blacks, and students form isolated pockets within the greater Cambridge community. The educational needs of these adults mirror the diverse complexity of the community itself. These needs include: basic reading and math for school drop-outs, English-as-a-Second-Language for the large and constantly growing non-English-speaking population, high school equivalency preparation for adults who seek better jobs of training and education related to career development, foreign language classes for community workers, and other basic skills for everyday survival and personal satisfaction.

B. STAFF ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

I found the entire CLC staff to be strongly attracted to the people who comprise the Model Cities neighborhood

in East Cambridge: the recent immigrants, disaffected school drop-outs, adult poor and working-class for whose benefit CLC programs have been designed. This attraction, combined with their awareness of the social and cultural differences between themselves and the surrounding community, produces caution.

I felt a palpable resistance on the part of CLC staff people to impose either their programs or their values upon the community. Despite Model Cities statistics which show lower-than-average educational levels for East Cambridge adults, the staff is well aware that, as one of them put it, "lots of people around here who've had a lousy education have made pretty good lives for themselves." There is no blind faith at CLC that education will be the salvation of the East Cambridge adult poor.

Nevertheless, they do have a lot of confidence in the value of the programs they are offering. Also, they want to be liked, they want to be appreciated, they want to be useful to the people who come to CLC. Yet they anticipate a reticence on the part of the poor and under-educated to whom services are being offered. They know that the trust and participation of such people are won slowly. Thus, for some or all of these reasons, they have preferred thus far to have the community come to

them, through relatives and friends of the people who have learned to trust and value the CLC, rather than to attempt to "sell" the CLC to the neighborhood. The expansion of CLC's "satellite" program indicates, however, that CLC staff are moving towards a more assertive outreach philosophy.

C. COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Among community strengths which CLC staff recognize and respond to are cultural/ethnic diversity and the warmth, sincerity, and interdependence of the people. "It is a multi-lingual area, so much culture, so much beauty, so much to give," commented one staff person. Other comments focused on the resources that community people have created in response to the demands of a difficult environment. "There is a closeness in the ghetto that you couldn't get anywhere else. You depend on each other; you don't trust outsiders." Another staff member spoke of "a sense of family--entire families come to CLC-- and a sense of supporting each other. Our students support each other and don't see each other as competitors." Another found that "the major strength and resource of the community is its people. They have a knowledge of the community, a knowledge of each other,

and specific skills such as sewing, typing, dance, car work, and math and reading skills, which they can teach to others."

"I think one of the strengths is a lack of any kind of affectation or hypocrisy," commented a fourth staff member, who sees among community people "a lot of real warmth for other people." The CLC, in her opinion, is able to respond: "I think we tie into some of those individual strengths in the way our classes are structured." A fifth staff member pointed to the "very close ties among people in various language communities--almost an insularity. There's a whole grapevine, or supportive group--and once you get inside and work with them you can do almost anything." She also finds much untapped potential in the skills of community residents. "There's an awful lot of really talented people who have individual skills--but who never get together."

For most of the staff people interviewed, the heart of the problem of untapped community resources, of skills unshared and cultural richness unappreciated, lies in the insularity of the various ethnic and cultural groups--and the fear that grows up where communication between such groups is lacking. "There's some beautiful solidarity within some of the ethnic groups--" remarked a CLC staff

member, adding, "there's also some in-fighting within and tension between some ethnic groups, also between older and more recent residents." Facilitating communication within, and between, such groups or factions is very much part of the CLC's education purpose. One staff person put it this way, "We try to create opportunities--within our classes--for people to talk to one another who would never approach one another outside CLC."

I was able to witness the kind of gentle support which CLC staff give to such interchange among students of different cultural backgrounds, on several occasions. I sat in a reading class where students were answering questions which other CLC students had placed in a Question Box. The questions touched often on social customs, such as dating. As the class tried to come up with answers, the opportunity for casually sharing cultural perspectives within the multi-racial, cross-cultural group was accepted without ever being identified or labelled as such.

On another occasion, I attended a CLC-sponsored outing to a local impromptu theater and noticed a reserved but genuine friendliness among the students. The staff members who had organized the outing told me that several of her students had confided that the social aspects of

the CLC were extremely important to them. These particular students were recent immigrants from several countries and were enrolled in ESL classes. I found significant the fact that these students chose the multi-cultural atmosphere of the CLC, rather than the culturally-segregated social clubs which are plentiful in East Cambridge.

A final observation of mine may or may not be significant. On the evening in which I introduced myself and the evaluation project to the CLC students, I arrived just at "break time," between classes. I noticed the students mingling in groups of two or three or four. Such little groups, more often than not, were multi-racial and multi-national.

Aside from the strengths and problems growing out of cultural diversity in East Cambridge, there is another set of factors affecting the people, factors which CLC staff are deeply aware of but feel rather powerless to influence. These are the socio-economic factors which weigh heavily on the poor and working-class families who make up the majority of neighborhood residents. Asked to describe the major problems of community people which make it more difficult for CLC to serve the needs of people, one CLC staff member responded, "Just poverty. Jobs that mean

they have to work all the time and are not able to have the time or the energy--the emotional or physical energy--to come to CLC and learn when they want to." She continued, noting "the sense of despair and hopelessness about future goals and options. Even if they learn more and get a diploma, so what? What choices will be available to them in terms of jobs, advancing themselves, feeling creative and productive?"

D. COMMUNITY NEEDS WHICH CLC IS NOT MEETING

When asked about those of the community's needs which the CLC does not attempt to meet, staff members stressed the socio-economic factors which generally afflict poor and working-class families in urban areas: "jobs, housing, health needs, services for the elderly, for young adults, teenagers, and babies." Some staff members included community needs which have explicitly political significance: "tenant organizing, arrest rights for teenagers, community organizing."

I asked whether the decision not to attempt to meet such needs had resulted from deliberate policy choices, lack of necessary skills or facilities, or bureaucratic limitations. With the exception of one person who felt that "our budget couldn't allow" for increased CLC

attention to the community's socio-economic needs, all of the CLC staff conceded that the choice had been a deliberate one.

"There are limitations on what you can do," answered Stephanie Roeder, ABE coordinator, who continued: "To start expanding means we lose our identity and also the extent of personal smallness that we have." ESL coordinator, Katy Kennedy finds "a lot of needs we're not meeting now, such as consumer education, ways of getting medical and other help, learning how to use available resources, or create them. We want to get involved in stuff like this but our training is in other areas--that's part of the frustration of having a learning center instead of a multi-service community center--which is something we want but are not sure about how to about getting."

And Margie Jacobs takes the same issue to the point of criticizing the CLC for not becoming such a "multi-service" agency: "Community organizing is a major need not met by the CLC. The CLC does not attempt to act as a catalyst, bringing together different parts of the community, and facilitating talents, skills, and resources." Ms. Jacobs finds the CLC "responding in only a very limited way to people's needs to meet other people and teach other people. People need CLC to be a social, cultural and political place."

E. SUMMARY

What I see as CLC's chief strength in relation to the community is the degree of sensitivity, commitment, respect and caring which I saw exhibited by the entire full-time staff (teachers, VISTAs, administrative assistants, director) towards the people of East Cambridge, as demonstrated by the following attitudes and actions:

1) The CLC staff recognize and value the distinct character and personality of the community. They insist upon relating their efforts and talents to the specific setting in which they work, rather than seeing themselves as delivering a standardized "service" to a "client" population.

2) They know the community they are working in--know its ethnic and cultural and socio-economic make-up, and are sensitive to the solidarity and insularity of the people who live there. They value the cultural strengths of these people and try to understand and overcome, where possible, the divisive factors--such as inter-group hostility and intra-group factions--which inhibit communication and cooperation between community residents. The CLC embodies such cross-cultural interaction in all its activities: class-room discussions, group outings, cultural presentations, etc.

3) CLC staff identify personally, in varying degrees of intensity, with the community itself. For many, East Cambridge is, or is becoming, their home, not just the neighborhood in which they work. All of them live in the community; several have become deeply involved in community life outside CLC; and others are finding that as they get to know their students better, their feelings for East Cambridge intensify.

4) Finally, CLC staff are able to pursue their own programs enthusiastically and energetically while bearing in mind the enormity of needs and the inter-relation of social and economic problems which make life extremely difficult for a large number of CLC students and other residents. They recognize the CLC's limitations in responding to those non-education needs (e.g. money, child care, health) which greatly diminish the ability of community residents to make use of available educational opportunities. The CLC staff exhibit very great admiration for their own students, for whom attendance at CLC classes often involves hardship and sacrifice. They maintain a tolerant and non-punitive attitude towards students who are unable, for personal or family reasons, to maintain regular attendance. And CLC staff people show understanding and respect for community residents of all ages who strive

to make good lives for themselves without the help of teachers, or schools, or learning centers of any kind.

What I see as CLC's principal weakness, in regard to the surrounding community, is its failure thus far to enlist and involve in a meaningful way the participation of community people in CLC governance, decision-making, and growth.

The recruitment of community-VISTAs from the neighborhood to teach in CLC programs is a move in that direction. But as of this evaluation study, the involvement of VISTAs in program development and governance had not reached a level of participation equal to that of the full-time professional staff. I do not mean to imply that the involvement of VISTAs in the CLC program as a whole is inadequate. Far from it! I was tremendously impressed by the VISTAs themselves and by the various responsibilities in which they are engaged. I am just saying that the problem of insufficient community participation will probably not be solved by the VISTAs alone.

Nor do I feel that instituting an "advisory committee" of neighborhood representatives could provide a sufficient answer to the need for some sense of genuine "community ownership" of the CLC. Far too often such advisory committees adopt a passive or re-active posture, focusing

on politics rather than on program development, and actually hinder rather than facilitate genuine community participation.

The answer to the need which I perceive for such participation lies somewhere else, in some other mode of community involvement or "sense of ownership." CLC can hardly be blamed for failing thus far to come up with the right formula or tactic. Few effective models exist and these few evolve only through great energy and care. But the need for meaningful community participation in CLC is real. As one staff member put it, "Since we don't have community people who are strongly involved in the CLC, it doesn't give us any sense of permanency. It makes us much more of a struggling neighborhood agency that could die at any time."

IX. CLC AND THE FUTURE

A. THE PROBLEM OF A "FINAL" ASSESSMENT

How far has CLC come--in its struggle to make a difference in the lives of the neighborhood people who come there to learn--and where does CLC go from here? It is very tempting, at the conclusion of an evaluation project, to try and neatly answer the first part of that question and then to play the prophet with the second part. But in the case of this evaluation, such an effort would be misleading. The question implies an assessment--over-time, in which the CLC is examined at various intervals to discover changes in direction, growth or decline.

To discover how far an organization has come, one must really be there at the beginning and compare its present condition with a previous one. But however exhaustive and intense the present evaluation of CLC has been, its time span has been relatively brief. Its focus has been on the people, the programs, and the sense of purpose behind CLC's day-to-day approach to the adult learning needs of its student constituency.

Without evaluating the CLC's growth or movement-over-time, one can nevertheless note that the CLC seems

to have passed through a period of "incubation" since Jill Rubinson, CLC director, resurrected it from internal disintegration in 1971. During this period, her highest priorities have been to reorganize the CLC into an effective educational center serving the learning needs of low-income adult residents of East Cambridge.

This period of reorganization, which has stressed staff development and program development, increasing enrollment, and interaction with neighborhood agencies in creating learning opportunities in the community, has been successfully completed. This is not an evaluative assessment. It is a statement of fact, based on in-depth observation of CLC daily operations, discussions with students, three and four-hour interviews with CLC staff, all of which has led me to view the CLC as an active, healthy, harmonious, and growing educational organization.

But it is also a statement of fact that the CLC has barely scratched the surface of the potential ABE, ESL, and GED students in Cambridge, and has hardly made a dent in the grim wall of statistics of Cambridge residents who cannot read, cannot speak English, or whose lack of a high school diploma restricts their economic and social development. CLC staff are well aware that they have no

control over the other critical factors--the social ills and inadequacies--which plague the poor and working-class neighborhoods of Cambridge and inhibit the ability of such people to avail themselves of educational programs. But such a realization cannot diminish the very strong evidence of CLC staff sensitivity, caring, and helpfulness towards the fraction of the community who are CLC students.

Obviously, therefore, a summary evaluation of "how much CLC has accomplished" or "how far CLC has come" depends upon one's perspective on the nature and size of the task the CLC is attempting to accomplish. From one point of view, the CLC has been tremendously successful, i.e. it has become a dynamic educational organization. From another perfectly valid viewpoint, the CLC has hardly begun to "solve" those problems which it and the entire Model Cities effort were designed to attack.

B. LOOKING TO SURVIVAL--AND BEYOND

But our inability to arrive at a universally valid assessment of CLC's effectiveness-accomplishment-worth to date only points to the crucial question of where the CLC goes from here. The nature of the challenge facing the CLC presents itself to me thus: the evidence

of this evaluation confirms, to my satisfaction, the strength and worth of the CLC within its own organizational structure and among its own students. But in the long run, the CLC will undoubtedly be judged by the kind of impact it makes on the community as a whole.

The shift of CLC sponsorship to the Cambridge School Department should signal an end to what I have called CLC's "incubation" period and the beginning of a more visible and more assertive role in the community. The CLC now belongs--in fact as well as in spirit--to the people of the city of Cambridge. It moves out from under the joint protection of a federal anti-poverty agency (Model Cities Administration) and a stern but kindly local contractor (Cambridge Public Library) into the politically-charged and publicly-accountable environment of the Cambridge School Department.

It is my opinion that the CLC cannot long survive in that environment solely on the basis of its internal coherence or the satisfaction of students currently enrolled. I am reminded of a comment by one CLC staff member: "It would be nice to either not have to worry about survival, or to have survival based on something that was somehow rational, something that you felt was worthwhile achieving."

Going further, she suggested that such "worthwhile" criteria might include "opening successful 'Satellite' programs" in various community settings "or having the internal success of the program be the basis, rather than irrelevant or non-educational criteria" by which she meant considerations of local politics which always seem to surround community-based programs.

I am suggesting that both criteria, the internal and the "outreach" aspects, are essential to CLC's survival, and both are inter-related. Although internal coherence is necessary to enable CLC staff to fully commit themselves to their work, the CLC will have to work for its survival out in the neighborhoods of Cambridge. The CLC stands to gain or lose credibility and support depending on several factors:

1) the nature of the mission CLC sets for itself in Cambridge;

2) its actual success in accomplishing that mission;

3) the image it is able to create among the various political forces, educational and social agencies, and ethnic or cultural groups, all of whom have an interest in what goes on in the Cambridge School Department and in the community as a whole.

The situation is made somewhat more complex by the the fact that in accepting sponsorship of the CLC, the School Department will not be providing any funding of its own for CLC program operation. The money to run CLC will continue to come, for a time, from Model Cities funds with additional funding being requested from H.E.W. adult education funds channeled through the Massachusetts Department of Education. The role of the School Department will be to replace the Cambridge Public Library as far as operational supervision and sponsorship of CLC is concerned.

The School Department's role is, however, potentially much more crucial to CLC survival than was that of the Public Library. For one thing, it appears that federal and state adult education monies can only be channeled through the School Department, whereas Model Cities had been able to choose any suitable local public agency to sponsor its projects. Also, when Model Cities funding ends, the CLC's linkage to the School Department may be its only link to federal and state funding, and any hope CLC may have to share in Cambridge revenue-sharing will likely depend upon its relationship with the School Department, now headed by Superintendent of Schools Alflorence Cheatham.

The lack of financial investment on the part of the School Department led one CLC staff member to hope that "they might not care to hassle us very much." Another admitted concern as to "whether there are any strings" involved in School Department sponsorship but acknowledged that "without School Committee support, it is going to take incredible energy just to stay open and it will involve incredible hassles."

C. OPTIONS FOR FUTURE CLC DEVELOPMENT

But guaranteed support for the near future is, as I have argued, no assurance of CLC survival in the long run. In attempting to define its mission with respect to adult education in Cambridge, the CLC will very likely choose from among the following options:

1. To remain essentially as they are, concentrated within the present CLC site, and to present themselves as a "model" facility for ABE, ESL, and GED instruction;

2. To greatly expand "outreach" efforts, by continuing to establish a number of "satellite" programs in neighborhood settings throughout Cambridge. The present CLC site would be retained and VISTA teachers would play a key role in setting up ABE, ESL, and GED programs

throughout the community;

3. To assume responsibility for coordinating all ABE, ESL, and GED instruction within the Cambridge School Department. This would probably mean transforming the present CLC site into a teaching/working model and supervising the training or retraining of School Department personnel involved in the ABE, ESL, and GED areas;

4. To establish itself as a community educational and social center, retaining current programs but moving to meet other community organizing and social service needs;

5. To move towards the concept of a community college, emphasizing job training and a wide range of postsecondary education programs.

D. LIKELY IMPLICATIONS FOR EACH OPTION

Without going into great detail, I would like to suggest some of the implications carried by each option, implications for the CLC in relation to a) the School Department, b) the Cambridge community, and c) its own present form of organization and values. Where comments by persons whom I interviewed lend support to the various options, I will try to mention them, although these options for CLC's future were <u>not</u> presented by me as such during

the interviews. Therefore, nobody's comment should be considered a statement of preference for one option over the others, unless so stated. And, of course, the suggested implications stem entirely from my own speculations, unless otherwise noted.

OPTION 1: the CLC to remain at its present site, a "model" program. Over the short range, CLC stability will be maintained, with perhaps some expansion of cultural activities and new course offerings at the present site. There is a long-range risk of loss of support, both from federal and local sources. I do not feel that the CLC's present student constituency is either large enough, or well enough mobilized, to lend CLC the political support it needs to survive. Unless additional funding is found from private sources, the CLC will probably lose favor both with the School Department and H.E.W., since it will not have been able to demonstrate that any of its program successes are replicable.

Although all CLC staff want to preserve the "atmosphere," "rapport," "collective working relationships," and their own roles as "teachers," they generally felt that such things could be maintained as part of CLC development of new program initiatives.

OPTION 2: the CLC to establish "satellite" programs in a variety of community settings.

The establishment of satellite programs, geared to special needs in particular community settings, presents a great opportunity for the CLC to increase its visibility and effectiveness while building on its current strengths. The chart of "CLC OUTREACH PROGRAMS," included on page 49 of this report demonstrates that the "satellite" process is already well under way. Linkages with other agencies and community organizations would be strengthened, since the satellites have to be collaborative undertakings. Satellites present ideal situations for community-VISTAs to take leadership roles, and opportunities for increased funding through ACTION might exist.

Such "satellite" successes might not be translated into political support, however, at least not without compelling CLC to choose what kind of opposition it is willing to contend with. Agencies and institutions which attempt to serve resident needs within urban neighborhoods usually become identified as either "advocacy" or "establishment" in character. Their staffs tend to orient themselves toward "community action," or to "professional delivery of services."

In selecting which community organizations to work with in developing satellite programs, CLC staff will most likely gravitate towards those groups whose values, objectives, and style of operation they feel comfortable with. In the past, they have chosen "action-oriented" agencies, such as Youth Resources Bureau and Job Bank, staffed by young people who care much more about relating closely with community people than maintaining a "professional" appearance.

It is conceivable that a CLC satellite program, located in informal community settings and involving VISTAs and other non-professionals in leadership roles, would jeopardize support for CLC among School Department and Massachusetts Department of Education personnel who might view such a program as "anti-establishment" or "anti-professional."

Still, the CLC has so far been able to maintain a balance within its own organization between the professional quality of its instructional programs and the warmth and informality of its student-centered atmosphere. If the CLC were somehow to integrate some School Department people and resources within a community-based satellite network, it would be a stunning achievement.

Enthusiasm for the satellite program was expressed by many of the people I interviewed, both inside and outside of the CLC. "The big thing is our satellite program," commented one CLC staff person, who reported that the CLC is looking for "groups that have a solid base in the community" and asking them "what they want" in the way of educational programs. Another staff person defined the satellite approach as "a city-wide adult education program that would be based on small neighborhood centers of which the CLC could be considered the pilot project." She expressed the belief that such a program "would guarantee not only permanency for CLC, but for community-based adult education the whole city."

Aurelio Torres, of C.O.P.A., felt that creation of the satellite program was the "right move" for the CLC, since it is especially necessary for beginning students to receive instruction in familiar and convenient settings. Natalie O'Connor, of the Spanish Council, expressed an interest in getting together with CLC to "bring ESL classes into the houses of Spanish-speaking residents."

Within the Model Cities Administration, Sally Jellenek volunteered that the CLC "is important as a centralized resource center" for Cambridge. She feels that the CLC

should be "outer-directed" in operation in view of "the multi-ethnic, decentralized locus of educational needs in Cambridge." She agreed with "the satellite approach" to CLC's expansion and favored retention of CLC's current site as a "prototype."

OPTION 3: the CLC to become a training site for adult education programs coordinated by the School Department, and/or for the CLC's own satellite network.

This would represent another considerable challenge for CLC staff, expecially since it would mean integrating CLC's present philosophy and approach with the demands of School Department programs and personnel. If such training were to be limited to para-professionals, then the task might be more manageable, since such people could be included in training and supervision activities now being implemented for VISTA teachers. The crucial question is, who will administer the programs for which people are being trained at the CLC?

One CLC staff teacher clearly anticipated that more of her energies and those of the entire professional staff would be directed toward training others and toward curriculum development. "The balance of our time is going to shift toward resource training, support, curriculum development (writing up ideas on how we do things for others to

use), and searching out new materials for the classes that go on here and the classes that will go on any place else. But all of us will still be teaching at least one or two classes, because we believe that you can't really develop things without being grounded in doing it."

OPTION 4: the CLC to become oriented towards a greater variety of "non-academic" community needs.

The question here is how far the CLC can go to meet the auxiliary and education-related needs of neighborhood people without losing its primary focus on adult education. Such a loss of focus would endanger both School Department and H.E.W. support, support which is based upon a view of the CLC as an educational facility, rather than a community-action or community services agency.

Of course, the CLC already offers to its students a number of services and activities in addition to adult education classes, and more are planned for the near future. In addition to wanting the CLC to experiment with short courses, such as helping students get learner's permits as a way of involving them in reading programs, CLC director, Jill Rubinson hopes the CLC "can make a way for people to get together for 'rap sessions' to discuss their

kids, drugs, etc., things that are not 'educational skills' but are ways for people to come together and think about things." She would like to be able to "hire someone who could do that well, or help set up such a program." Sally Waldron expressed interest in "VISTAs as counsellors, expanding social activities, and having mini-courses and rap sessions on kids." Stephanie Roeder, another CLC teacher, mentioned that the Youth Resources Bureau had set up a teen center near the Roosevelt Towers housing project and that she expected the CLC and herself personally to get involved in that project. GED instructor Margie Jacobs expressed herself more strongly than other CLC staff that the CLC "should become more involved in community organizing and 'non-educational' activities and classes." And Carole von Setzer, the administrative assistant, stressed the need for "a cultural program, an arts and crafts program, and placement services" in addition to current educational programs. For his part, Joseph Sakey, director of the Cambridge Public Library, expressed a need for CLC staff to draw a clearer distinction between academic and non-academic programs and to decide just what part of the adult education picture the CLC would be responsible for.

"The CLC mandate for adult education should be more clearly articulated," suggested Mr. Sakey, "so as to avoid possible duplication with other city agencies involved in adult education."

OPTION 5: the CLC to develop job-training programs leading to a community college.

There is a lot of excitement connected with the notion of building the CLC into a community college. The CLC could draw on the support and collaboration of various neighborhood agencies and organizations interested in college-level programs involving certification for community people who might enroll in them. The establishment of various career programs could act as a powerful incentive for community residents to get involved with ABE and GED programs as a first step to a specific job opportunity with which they can identify. Moreover, the idea of connecting education with employment is very powerfully reinforced by our society, and the development of career-training programs by CLC could act as a magnet for both support and funding from local, state, and federal sources.

The risk for CLC would be the loss of their primary focus on ABE, ESL, and GED and the possible diffusion of staff energies over a wide range of complex programs and

activities. The sense of intimacy, autonomy, and coherence which CLC staff seem to value so highly in their current relationships with each other and with their students would be inevitably strained by shifting to a community-college level of organization. However, the introduction of one or two career-training programs might be feasible with small additions to CLC's staff and would give the CLC a better idea of what to expect should the community college concept become adopted.

Among CLC staff, Carole von Setzer spoke most strongly about the need to provide postsecondary education opportunities for CLC students. "If we had the money and the staff, I would like to see an ongoing educational process where you get your high school equivalency and go on to some kind of career training that is going to be meaningful and worthwhile, something that people could work at and still retain their dignity." Other CLC staff stressed the need to help students with job placement and employment counseling, but staff interviews produced no widespread interest in transforming the CLC into a community college.

Outside CLC, however, such an interest was expressed by persons familiar with the CLC. James Farrell, director of the Model Cities Administration, expressed the belief that "potentially, all the elements are there for the CLC

to provide an extremely successful effort towards adult education" as well as "a good nucleus for a community college." Joseph Sakey spoke of a need for "expansion of the role of the CLC" in terms of "gearing programs towards job orientation," and proceeded to describe several examples of two-year, work-study, career programs in the vocational-technical area which he felt were needed by Cambridge residents and for which community resources and training sites were potentially available. In addition, both the Spanish Council and Job Bank mentioned that discussions about an "Adult College" for Cambridge residents had taken place with CLC staff people.

E. SUMMARY

That the CLC is a healthy, growing, harmonious and well-coordinated educational organization seems to me to be obvious from the wealth of evidence which I have gathered throughout the evaluation project. That tremendous problems exist for low income people of Cambridge; problems which in many cases are related to inadequate education, lack of a high school diploma, or inability to read, write or speak English; problems which the CLC has not as yet begun to tackle in a comprehensive and fully-coordinated manner--is also obvious.

Thus, an evaluation of CLC must turn to the question of the future growth and expansion of its current operational effectiveness. It seems fairly clear to me that long-range survival for CLC is linked to its assuming an expanded and more assertive role within the Cambridge community. Indeed, the acceptance of CLC sponsorship on the part of the Cambridge School Department, and the acceptance by CLC of a new emphasis on outreach in its "satellite" program, strongly suggest that a larger and more visible role for CLC is already in the making.

But such indications of support and success only lead to another and more complex dilemma for the CLC. The dilemma has two parts: 1) how can CLC's internal

effectiveness--based on close, collaborative and trusting relationships among its staff and personal attention to the needs of each student--be transformed into a program structure capable of reaching the hundreds of potential learners who do not now find their way to the present CLC site? 2) which of the various options for program development which CLC staff and others are now considering will best serve the interests of the CLC, the Cambridge School Department, and other individuals, agencies, and groups who have a stake in adult education for Cambridge citizens?

Looking at the second part of the dilemma first, the CLC has several options to consider. It can remain essentially at its present site and concentrate on ABE, ESL, and GED programs and present itself as a "model." It can move ahead with its "satellite" program and offer a variety of programs in setting throughout the community. It can become a training center for adult education personnel, or a center for community action in both educational and non-academic areas of need. Or it can strive to become a community college oriented to the adult population of Cambridge.

Each of these options has certain advantages and entails certain risks. Since it is extremely unlikely that the CLC could implement any of the more ambitious

options on its own, the choice of whom to collaborate with becomes a crucial strategic question. Some organizations have access to funding, some don't. Some are members in good standing of the local political structure, some aren't. Some will reach out to people in need and interact with them in a sensitive and caring manner, some won't.

The choice of which agencies, organizations, and institutions to work with in creating an expanded adult education program rests, of course, largely with the CLC staff. To this point they have shown very great flexibility in interacting with a wide spectrum of organizations in Cambridge, as may be seen in the chart on "CLC OUTREACH AND INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION," on page 49. Partly as a result of such flexibility, the CLC seems for the moment to be adopting some part of all of the developmental options listed above.

But in a very real sense, the choice of where and how to grow rests not only with the CLC but with those agencies and organizations who are in a position to provide funding and other program support for CLC involvement in any or all of these options. The realities are, simply, that funding is the key to program development. It would be very wise, however, for any potential

funding source to recognize the merits of CLC flexibility in program development, so that the greatest impact upon the community can be gained from whatever funds are made available. The success of CLC's effort to train community-VISTAs to respond to adult education needs of different groups of Cambridge citizens is an example of CLC operational flexibility that is worthy of continued support.

Returning, now, to the first part of CLC's dilemma, we must assume that continued support for CLC will provide a basis for expansion of CLC programs to reach a wider audience among Cambridge adults. What is going to happen to that "special relationship" that exists among CLC staff and students working together in that drafty old building on Columbia Street, once the balance of CLC staff efforts shifts from teaching students directly to training other teachers, or developing "satellites," or creating career-training or community college programs? Will success in CLC's new relationship with the Cambridge School Department mean that CLC's "atmosphere" will dissipate within a large professional bureaucracy?

These are serious questions, for more than once has a small, dynamic, internally-coherent organization failed to survive the effects of expansion. In such cases, it

is later realized that simply expanding the program, or dividing up the staff and putting each person in charge of an entire program, has robbed the organization of its vital nucleus. With respect to the CLC, where so much of its current effectiveness is based on close collaboration among staff, the dangers inherent in the wrong kind of expansion are quite real.

CLC staff are not unaware of these dangers involved in expansion. I found among them a certain ambivalence towards the very idea of expansion and a realization that their's is not a product which can be mass-produced. I am encouraged by the care and thoughtfulness with which they have begun developing their outreach network of "satellite" programs. I only hope that similar caution and sensitivity will be exercised by those individuals and organizations upon whom CLC depends for its financial and political support. The fate of some very worthwhile programs rests on the wisdom of their decisions.